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Backstreets

#66 SPRING 2000

THE MAGAZINE OF HOPE AND DREAMS



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Backstreets

BORN AND PRINTED IN THE USA

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Manufactured and printed in the United States of America
Backstreets (ISSN 0746-990X) is published quarterly by The Backstreets Publishing Empire, LLC, PO Box 11079, Washington, DC 20008, USA with offices at 2607 24th St NW Suite #4, Washington DC 20008. Please address all correspondence to Backstreets, PO Box 11079, Washington DC 20008. E-mail: editor@backstreets.com (for letters to the editor); orders@backstreets.com (for subscriptions). Web site: http://www.backstreets.com. Subscriptions are available for \$22 a year, \$36 for two years, or \$48 for three years in the US and Canada (in US funds only); or for overseas airmail, rates are \$30 a year, \$55 for two years, or \$75 for three years (in US funds only). All contents are copyright ©2000 The Backstreets Publishing Empire, LLC. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with any inquiries. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send all address changes to Backstreets, PO Box 11079, Washington DC 20008. Thank you. Backstreets is an independent publication and is not officially associated with any of the performers we write about or their record companies.

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www.backstreets.com

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

11/21/99 Albany, NY
Debra L. Rothenberg Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

2/28/00 State College, PA
David Bottimore Photo

LETTERS

IT AIN'T NO SIN

Dear Editor:

If, a year ago, someone had told me that my book [*It Ain't No Sin to Be Glad You're Alive: The Promise of Bruce Springsteen*] would receive extremely favorable notices in places like *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *People*, *Maxim*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, generous blurbs from E.L. Doctorow and Rosanne Cash, and win the 1999 Stephan Crane Literary Award, but displease a reviewer from *Backstreets*, I probably would have replied, "I guess I can live with that." So I'm not too upset with Bob Zimmerman's comments that "Alterman doesn't really add anything new to the story." Reviewers are entitled to voice any reasonable opinion, and Zimmerman is correct, at least, in his implicit assumption that the book was never intended for Springsteen obsessives. Still, his criticism would have wounded a bit more deeply had he not

gone on just a few paragraphs later to note that Christopher Sandford's book (about which I have not and will not comment) contains "interesting yarns, previously unheard," and offered, as his only example: "Springsteen's fortunes changed at the label only after a CBS President's son at Brown University read in his school newspaper that Springsteen was being treated 'bad' by CBS." Alas, if only Mr. Zimmerman had read *It Ain't No Sin* with a bit more care, he would have learned the same "yarn" on page 59 (chapter three, page 1), replete with said executive's name, Irwin Segelstein.

Such sloppiness may not be a sin, and it certainly is "nothing new" even in the best fan magazines. But it ain't exactly professional, neither.

Eric Alterman
via e-mail

NEW THING I'VE FOUND

Dear Editor:

Jason Berkley's letter from the Winter edition was to me a perfect characterization of the Bruce

cultists, and how they, in their own way, can do as much damage as the so-called "assholes."

There are all kinds of Bruce fans, Jason, and many choose to enjoy the music and the show in different ways. Take me, for example. Like you, I'm sure, I know every word to every song, and could (and sometimes do) sing each syllable at the top of my lungs. I know just when to pump my fist, when to raise my hands, and where to place each "la la" and "oh oh." I've learned this in the 40+ times I've been to see the band.

There was a day when that really mattered to me. Instead of being excited for someone who was enjoying the thrill of their first Springsteen concert, I was somewhat disgusted that they hadn't found their way to Bruce sooner. I was also disgusted at the people in the audience who didn't share my all-consuming enthusiasm. This all reached a climax (as it probably did for many others) when *Born in the U.S.A.* became so popular. Suddenly the people who only knew the words to "Dancing in the Dark" outnumbered the ones who had "Wings For Wheels" memorized. I hated those Johnny-come-latelys and "un-true" fans who kept me from getting tickets. I was so mad that I probably went several years without even putting one of Bruce's albums on the turntable.

And you know what? Just like my mother used to say, I was only cheating myself. Fortunately, I came back to my senses in the early '90s and now enjoy the whole experience of being a Springsteen fan differently than I once did. Just as much, mind you, but differently.

So here I am, older and hopefully wiser. And last week, as so many of you have, I had the joyful experience of taking my wife to her very first Springsteen concert. And you know, maybe she only knew the words to half of the songs. And she didn't know when to raise her hands or pump her fist. And she didn't know to "go nuts" when the show opened with "Take 'Em". But I did. And I enjoyed the moment just as much as anyone in the arena. I just did it quietly, to myself. And, true, we did actually sit down several times during the show. I know, it's shocking. Maybe next

time we should be denied entrance, right Jason?

If seeing Bruce truly is a religious experience (and I definitely agree that it can be) why not practice one of the tenets of religion that is so often forgotten these days: Tolerance.

Why don't we all stop trying to judge who is the "biggest, the longest-term, the 'truest' fan, and just enjoy the music?

John Taylor
via e-mail

GLORY DAYS

Dear Editor:

Like most of the readers of *Backstreets*, I have been to many shows on the current tour. However, it's about time that this tour come to an end. While the prospect of seeing Bruce play live with the band—particularly Max—is still thrilling, there are some obvious problems with the whole thing.

This is basically an oldies tour, with almost no new material to speak of, except one above-average song that is played each night. Some of the qualities that made Bruce the greatest rock 'n' roll performer ever (high kinetic energy, stories and dialogue, and musical improvisation) are absent on most nights of the tour.

This has been a great little run for memories and fun. While it is hard to imagine the band not playing together again now that they are back, it's clear that he wouldn't be able to do this type of show if they do tour again. But unless there is an album with new material in the future, what could they do instead?

Mike Bauer
Park Ridge, IL

GET THE JOB DONE

Dear Editor:

I am as thrilled as the next person about the reunion of the E Street Band, but if I could get one single point across to Bruce, Jon Landau and the band it would be this, as loud and clear as I could make it: Please get into the studio and cut a record as quickly as you can! As powerful and wonderful as the current concert is, the fact of the matter is, it does not add to the discography, which for a 25-year career, is pretty sparse in terms of released records.

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Take it easy
But take it.
Woody Guthrie

He should take advantage of the reunion to grant his fans what they really want, which is something that lasts far, far longer than a three-hour live concert. That is a new E Street Band recording—and then another soon thereafter, before they all get well into their 50's and inevitably begin to lose some of the power, energy and magic. Concerts make great memories, but recordings last!

I flew to Memphis to take in that show at the Pyramid Center. At the end of "Land of Hope and Dreams," someone in the front row raised a sign that said, on one side "Release Hope and Dreams," and on the reverse it said, "Faith will be rewarded." This sign echoes my sentiments about releasing new material. Maybe shows like the Memphis one would be sold out (it wasn't even close) if he had some new material on the airwaves. I'll go regardless, because I love his work and know the obscure pieces, but I sure would like to hear some new E Street stuff too—starting with incomparables like "Land of Hope and Dreams." Sounds like a good title track, doesn't it?

K. D. Kirk
Fairfax, VA

LAY DOWN YOUR MONEY

Dear Editor:

A lot of letters to *Backstreets* deal with money and prices. It started when *Tracks* came out; fans were writing things like "too expensive" and "robbery." 18 *Tracks* made them even more furious. And now it's all about concert tickets. What is wrong with you people? Is money the main issue here? If you think *Tracks* isn't worth the money, then don't buy it. If you think a concert ticket is way over your budget, then don't go. If you think a concert T-shirt is way out of line, then make one your own. No one forces you to go or buy things! It doesn't matter which artist you want to see: you have to pay the price, simple as that. And a lot of them call it a day after 90 minutes, while Bruce gives you one hell of a ride. No supporting act, just plain Bruce, all evening. And people are complaining about a concert ticket—I really can't understand it!

Don't misread me: I do not

belong to the rich and famous myself, and I have to think twice before spending my money. But I make my choices, like everyone else. I wanted to see him perform (no matter the cost). I traveled through Europe to see him, spending much more on hotels and trains than anything else. I wanted all his records (no matter how many "tracks"), and I wanted a lot of bootleg memories. So I have spent a lot of money on Bruce, and because of that I had to cut down other things.

So please, stop complaining about prices and stuff. If you think you can spend your money on better or more important things, then please go ahead. To me it's simple: I think it's worth it, each and every dime. His music is more important to me than me then a brand new computer, a holiday, a new used car, new clothes or even a good meal in town. So stop sulking and treasure the music!

Jan Bruinsma
Amsterdam, Netherlands

THEY'LL PASS YOU BY

Dear Editor:

I just want to say for the record that I wish Springsteen's management was as inventive and courageous in selling tickets as Springsteen was in making music. I got entirely shut out in New York, and I think this is ridiculous.

Very simply, there should have been a four-ticket limit for the entire stand. Period.

Twenty tickets for the entire stand? How many people do you think are going to see all ten shows, and how many do you think are seeing none? These are shows that generated worldwide interest. So many people got screwed out of tickets, and I think it really, really sucks.

David Billotti
New York, NY

'TIL IT'S UNDERSTOOD

Dear Editor:

I felt I had to write after reading the letters page—more correspondence complaining about paying the going rate for a Springsteen concert ticket. So it costs \$70 to hear songs about social isolation—that's a harsh viewpoint. But perhaps there's

Continued page 34

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The E Street Band... right now!

Further on up the Road

By Christopher Phillips

"I simply want to do... like what Neil Young does with Crazy Horse. He'll go and do a project with different musicians, and then he'll come back and play with Crazy Horse when he has something that feels right for them."

—Bruce Springsteen, May 1995

Springsteen has certainly made good on those words. At the time, the E Street Band had just reconvened to record a few cuts for *Greatest Hits*, and the band played the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame grand opening that September. By late that fall he was a solo troubadour, and the brief E Street reunion felt a million miles away. But here we are, five years burning down the road, and there have been times in the midst of this tour when it felt like the band was never apart.

Just a little further on up the road, however, the end is in sight. By July, the reunion tour will be over, and Springsteen's plans remain a mystery. It's been a few years since we've faced that old feeling. Two years ago, word of a box set in the works had fans salivating, and since then—between *Tracks*, the Hall of Fame induction and the E Street tour—it's been a non-stop banquet. But as it stands now, the ten Madison Square Garden shows are the last of the E Street Band tour and the end of currently known Boss activity.

So what's next? Springsteen fans have to be prepared for a dry period of several years between projects—we've been through that desert more than a few times already. But let's assume that after a well-deserved rest, Bruce gets back to business. Speculation has basically come down to this—is the next album a live one, perhaps a long-overdue full concert release? Or will the E Street Band head into the studio? With Springsteen doing minimal press, fans have had to mull this one over in the dark. No information has been solid enough to foretell which way the chips will fall, and best-guesses have wavered from one side to the other.

As for a live album, a true concert document is long overdue. The *Live/1975-85* box set was an astounding overview of Bruce and the Band's live performances over the years. It lacked, however, the ordered tension and release that can make one night with the band a life-changing night. Springsteen clearly pays a great deal of attention to the structure of the live show. Bringing that structure to disc would provide something that bears repeated listenings and feels more whole than the scatter-shot *Live* box.

It's easy to imagine a live album in time for the holidays—it would actually be a surprise if the same crew that issued *Greatest Hits* just in time for the Grammys back in 1995 didn't decide to strike while the iron is hot. But to my mind, the hottest thing going at the moment is the E Street Band, and my vote would be to get them in the studio as quickly as possible. Do not pass Go, do not collect 200 dollars, do not look back.

Not only has it been five years since an album of new material from Bruce, it's been over 15 since he and the band recorded an album in the studio as a unit. Steve Van Zandt has remarked that one of his original goals with the band was to be able to record live in the studio as a band. Having clearly reached that goal by *The River* and early *Born in the U.S.A.* sessions, Van Zandt felt free to move on to the next challenge. But with the rebirth and recommitment of the band, imagine the E Streeters in the studio now, at arguably the peak of their powers and after a year-and-a-half warm-up session. If they could whip out six songs, maybe more, in the week or so of sessions for *Greatest Hits*, six weeks could see a fully-crafted record. Think back to the spontaneous drum-break-down at the end of the album version of "Born in the U.S.A.," and imagine what kind of magic could happen in the studio now.

Not just on the rockers. From the sublime "Follow That Dream," performed without rehearsal in Memphis, to the subtle nuances

the band brings to songs like "The Ghost of Tom Joad" and "Mansion on the Hill," the E Streeters have the ability not only to play anything that Springsteen's compositions call for, but also to add the hues that make a good performance great. With that group of musicians behind him—*right now*—he can't go wrong.

So what'll it be—live album or E Street studio album? As this issue of *Backstreets* went to press, Springsteen briefly broke radio silence and talked to Steve Morse of the *Boston Globe*. Morse wrote that Bruce is "pleased with the 'presentness' of the E Street Band and its willingness to 'recommit.' And while he hedged his bets on future plans, he said he expected to work with the band again, though he also said he has some acoustic songs he wants to attend to."

I practically smacked myself in the forehead when I read that. Of course. Of course we have no idea what comes next. And of course Springsteen can be counted on to do what's least expected. For all we know, Bruce's next release could be that lost hip-hop album.

As much as Van Zandt sees a studio album in the band's future, he doesn't seem to know what comes next either. As he told Jane Stevenson of the *Toronto Sun*: "I think the rebirth of the band is permanent. Now, what does that mean exactly? I don't know. Does that mean we will immediately start a record? I don't know. We haven't talked about that. I think it is probably inevitable that we will think about doing a new record, but will it be the next record that Bruce decides to do? I don't know. He may do something else first. But I think it feels a little too good to just sort of walk away. I don't think that's going to happen."

If Stevie doesn't know, the rest of us would be crazy to make predictions. One of the reasons Springsteen has remained such a vital artist is that he follows his muse, expectations be damned. And with the twists and turns his career has taken over the last 20

years, I've yet to be disappointed. But I do think it would be a mistake to record right now without the E Street Band. No disrespect toward Bruce intended—hell, he's the one who sold me on 'em: *the legendary E! Street! Band!* And I can't help but think about what that gypsy said, as Springsteen has relayed it to us night after night: "What you need is a band!" After so many visits to the River of Life, how can you argue with the gypsy?

* * *

BUSINESS STUFF

Thanks to everyone for all the support during our move—we couldn't have asked for more, and the new *Backstreets* office is now fully operational. Many thanks to the fans and friends in the D.C. area who welcomed us to town and even volunteered to help, readers everywhere else who wished us well, and everyone who was understanding with the inevitable delays. This is the first issue we've put together in our new location, and while it took a little longer to get this one out the door, it also makes it feel like we're officially settled.

Be sure to take note of all of our new contact information. We now have a new fax number: (202) 232-2259. You can reach us by phone at either (202) 232-BOSS or 1-800-326-BOSS. (If your phone is alphabet-free, "BOSS" is 2677.) We also have a P.O. Box, which is the best way to reach us by mail: Backstreets, P.O. Box 11079, Washington D.C. 20008. As always, send letters to the editor, tour comments, and news to editor@backstreets.com; e-mail subscriptions and orders to orders@backstreets.com.

I hope you'll keep in touch—we can't say enough how much we count on contributions and input from our readers, whether it's tour reports, photos, or news from all corners of the Boss world. *Backstreets* wouldn't be possible without your help. And I'm still hoping someone got a photo of Bruce with the bra on his head in Cincinnati. Anyone? 🐾

Jersey Shore rock comes to the UK

Meeting Across the Pond

By Mike Saunders

New Jersey rock (by way of New York City and Pittsburgh) took a weekend vacation this winter. The Greetings From Asbury Park package tour, comprising Willie Nile, John Eddie, Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan, and Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers, came to England for shows in London (February 19) and Sheffield (February 20). With the exception of Grushecky, each artist made his UK debut on this lightning visit, which saw them sharing equipment (and occasionally band members) in the interest of fast changeovers and the preservation of rock 'n' roll momentum.

The inspiration for the tour came in September 1999, when a party of 200 fans from the UK—members of *Badlands* and subscribers to the UK fanzine *The Ties That Bind*—flew to the States to see Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band in Philadelphia. Unfortunately, their visit coincided with the arrival of Hurricane Floyd, and one of the two shows they had planned to see was postponed. Musical consolation was quickly provided by D'Urso & Stone Caravan, Eddie, and Grushecky and the Houserockers, who all performed for the disappointed European contingent in the bar of their hotel in Toms River, NJ.

The *Badlands* group did get to see Bruce and the E Streeters but also returned home with fond memories of the bands who entertained them so generously

in Bruce's absence. The "Greetings From Asbury Park" package tour provided the opportunity for survivors of the Philly trip to relive the magic and for several hundred others to check out what they'd missed.

Buffalo-born New York City resident Willie Nile (the only performer who didn't play at the Toms River hotel) kicked off the Sheffield gig with an energetic set which showcased material from his latest album, *Beautiful Wreck of the World*. His lyrics often displayed a quirky humor reminiscent of Loudon Wainwright III in a set that contained poignant ballads, bouncy rockers, and a cover of "Substitute." Nile was finally joined by D'Urso and other members of the traveling company for a full-band work-out on "Heaven Help the Lonely."

Jersey shore veteran John Eddie has experienced more than his fair share of record company hassles, but he remains a compelling performer and first-rate songwriter. His latest album, *Happily Never After* (from which the bulk of his set was drawn) is an instant classic. For many in attendance, he stole the show, taking the stage with attitude and encouraging the crowd to "make some Sunday-night-stuck-in-Sheffield-with-the-New-Jersey-blues-again noise, y'all!" Barely pausing for breath, he and his

muscular band bombarded the audience with insistent riffs. "And on the seventh day, God said go to Sheffield and play some fuckin' rock and roll!" continued the irrepressible Eddie, closing his set with a pounding version of "Suspicious Minds."

Hailing from Rockland County, New York, Joe D'Urso and

Stone Caravan (who first came to the attention of a UK audience with the *One Step Up/Two Steps Back* tribute album) were next and performed an hour's worth of their own brand of rootsy rock. The unreleased "Rock and Roll Call" told the tale of a

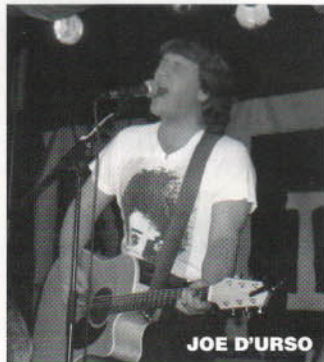
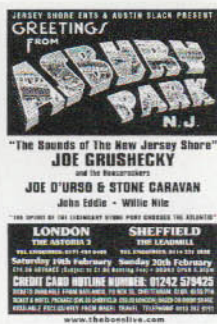
teenager's discovery of rock history, namechecking a succession of influential stars (including Springsteen, Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan) in the process.

Joe Grushecky first toured the UK with the Houserockers in 1996 and was the best-known of the four acts on the bill, due largely to his collaboration with Bruce on 1995's *American Babylon*. Songs from that record rubbed shoulders with an assortment of covers and other Houserockers material, including their hometown anthem, "Pumping Iron, Sweating Steel." "We're from Pittsburgh, PA—used to be the steel-making capital of the U.S.," announced Grushecky in the steel-making capital of England. "But they tore all them mills down and put up shopping cen-

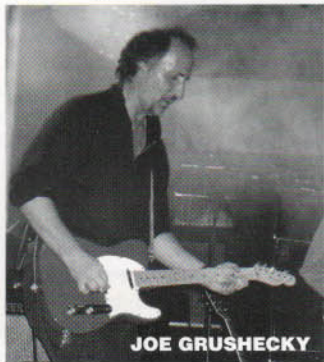
ters too, so we know what you guys feel like out there." At the end of the night, a final encore brought everyone on stage for "Twist and Shout," concluding more than three-and-a-half hours of sweaty bar band magic.

Were it not for Bruce Springsteen, it's unlikely that any of these bands would have had the opportunity to play in England. In recognition of his enduring influence (and of the crowd's obvious bias), most of the artists on the tour included one or two Springsteen compositions in their sets. D'Urso and Stone Caravan weighed in with versions of "Johnny Bye Bye" and "Badlands" (dedicated to "all you guys who came over to Toms River"). In Sheffield John Eddie announced, "Last night, we had a real short set and I couldn't pander to the audience as much as I'm about to," prior to blasting through an impressive performance of "She's the One."

Finally, Grushecky contributed a blistering "Light of Day" with the Houserockers and an excellent solo-electric performance of "I Don't Want to Go Home"—simultaneously acknowledging the songwriting talents of Steve Van Zandt and the vocal skills of Southside Johnny. It was a special moment, reminding everyone of New Jersey's rich musical history and perfectly capturing the spirit of the mini-tour. It may never happen quite this way again, but for two nights, UK fans were able to experience the flavor of the New Jersey rock circuit in their own backyard. 🍻



JOE D'URSO



JOE GRUSHECKY



JOHN EDDIE



WILLIE NILE



Stone Pony back in the saddle

Giddy-up!

By Robert Makin

With businesses on the boardwalk rented, and both the Stone Pony and Fast Lane open once again, Asbury Park could be headed for its best summer in many years.

The Lane opened the first full weekend in April with such local rock legends as Sonny Kenn, George Theiss, Lance Larson, Ricky DeSarno, Bobby Bertelson, Paul Whistler and the Blackberry Blues Band. Shows were planned throughout the month.

For Memorial Day Weekend, the new owner of the Stone Pony, Dominic Santana, has planned "The Stone Pony Reunion and Asbury Park Festival," featuring The Smithereens, John Cafferty & the Beaver Brown Band, Gary "U.S." Bonds, Lance Larson with Bernard Purdie, Nick Clemons, Swampadelica, the Jazz Lobsters, Scarlet Blues Band, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony with New Jersey Gov. Christie Todd Whitman. The event will take place outside the club during the day and inside at night throughout the weekend.

Santana, who also owns the Hard Grove Cafe in Jersey City, bought the legendary club for \$375,000 from Steve and Judy Nasar in late February. He put \$125,000 of renovations into the club, much of which will celebrate the history of Asbury Park and its beloved music scene. Particularly interesting are a Wall of Fame, featuring the many musicians who made up the sounds of Asbury Park; a ten-foot high mural depicting the "Greetings from Asbury Park" postcard that served as the title of Bruce Springsteen's debut album (and inspired the name of this column); and table-tops featuring newspaper articles and photos from the Asbury Park Press. Plans also include turning the Pony into a Hard Rock Cafe-like chain, with a location in Santana's birthplace of Havana.

Longtime Jersey Shore promoter Brian Nelson will help



The "new" Stone Pony gets ready to ride once again.

with the local band bookings. New York-based Delsner/Slater will provide national acts. Santana had a falling-out with two previous promoters before securing the two with whom he'll be working.

Santana talked to *Backstreets* about being the new owner of the Stone Pony and what that may mean for Asbury Park as both a resort and a music scene.

What's going to happen to the stained-glass pony that was put into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland after Nasar turned the Pony into the failed Vinyl club two years ago?

If they don't have it up, I'm sure they'll loan it to us. We've gotten in touch with the original people who built it so it could be duplicated.

So how do you like being the owner of the Stone Pony?

We have been overwhelmed by so many people. We've gotten milk crates full of tapes from people who want to play here. Right now, we're just trying to bring in the reins. This place will always give a forum to people to express themselves. We're just trying to survive Memorial Day weekend right now.

Who'll be on hand for the local-oriented first night of the festival?

Bernard Purdie, one of the most beloved drummers of all

time, and lots of special guests. We felt strongly that a tribute to Lance Larson would be good. Like most humans, life has been funny for Lance. He's gone through his ups and downs, but his nature and background have brought him back. He's played with almost everybody at the Pony. We felt it was the right time to say welcome back to Asbury Park to someone has been so important to the Asbury Park music scene. This is Lance's return from hell, because he's been in jail. He's made mistakes. We all make mistakes. But I'm really pleased to give him another opportunity. That's what the Stone Pony is all about.

What made you want to buy the Pony? Asbury is a potential goldmine, but its corrupt recent past seems to still be getting in the way. Is the Pony a good financial investment or more a labor of love?

It's not about Bruce, or even the Stone Pony. It's really about fact that this is a great American city. In its heyday, Asbury was the honky-tonk town of New Jersey. Even Sherman Binkley of the Stork Club came here to the Albion Hotel, which was the Copa of the Jersey Shore, to get his talent for New York. Asbury Park was always a haven for musicians, going back to the '30s before you or I or Bruce ever came through here.

Do you think that Asbury Park can go through a renaissance like Newark is right now?

I wouldn't be here if I didn't believe so. But it's not about the money. It's about the love of the music and what the Pony meant to people in the music industry and the area.

Bruce will be touring with the E Street Band far from Asbury Park on Memorial Day Weekend. I guess you're not expecting him.

But there are a lot of people very much excited about this place coming back who [we do expect]. We get 650 e-mails a day from around the world. That leads us to expect the unexpected and the unknown. That's always been what the Pony was about. Who was going to come by to jam? There have been a lot of people who've come through this place. We've talked to Vini Lopez. He's expected to stop in. Ernest "Boom" Carter is expected. So many names I've talked to are excited about this place.

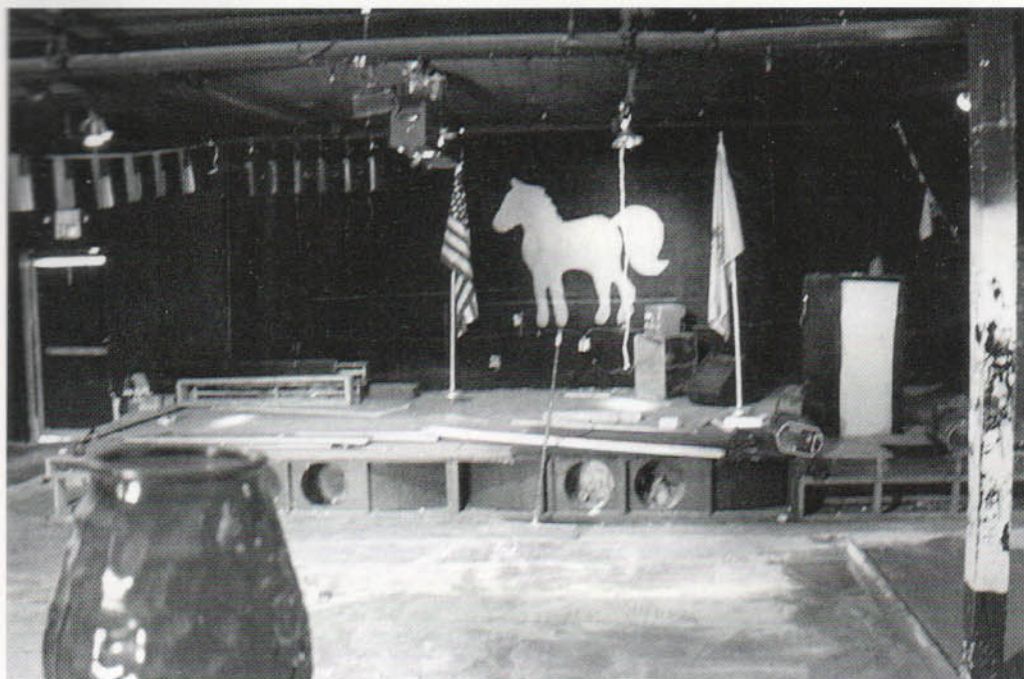
Tell me about "Asbury Nights" with Cats on a Smooth Surface, the Pony's longtime house band that jammed with Bruce throughout the 1980s.

"Asbury Nights" is going back to the great nights that made this place so popular. We're not reinventing the wheel. We're just going back to where it was left off. Hopefully, we'll continue from there.

What other plans do you have for this summer in terms of programming?

Mondays we're calling "The Stone Pony Rock 'n' Roll Challenge." We're going to be looking at local and regional bands to give them the opportunity to show their stuff. We've gotten over 15 milk crates of tapes and press packs. We've been totally overwhelmed with people who want to play. We're basically saying we're going to give everyone a chance.

Tuesdays is doo-wop, which has a long history in Asbury Park. We'll fuse that with jazz



Above and right: Rebuilding "The House that Bruce Built." The Pony interior undergoes renovations for its Memorial Day reopening.

and big band, which also has been huge in Asbury. Latin will bring a new twist for the Pony. I have so many friends in the Latin music business. Being of Cuban descent, it's been a great honor to befriend one of the world's finest composers, Juan Pablo Torres. Because of his friendship, I have gotten to know the Cuban All-Stars and the musicians of the Buena Vista Social Club. So I'm very fortunate to have an emotional bond with the older legends of Cuban music. We'll be sure to sneak them in here and there to jam with the gringos.

Wednesdays will be blues and R&B with Terraplane Blues and Scarlet Blues Band. I've seen them in action, and they're unbelievable. They have such large followings and attract many special guests.

Thursdays we're billing as "Thursday Night Live," featuring Samhill. Samhill has original members of Mr. Reality, and they'll play with a headliner every week. The first week, it will be Brian Kirk & the Jerks on June 8.

Fridays we'll have national acts, tribute bands and regional and local artists. Saturdays is the "All Out Rock 'n' Roll Dance Party" featuring the big rock 'n' roll cover bands on the Jersey



Shore, like Love Lies Bleeding and Big Orange Cones.

What are you going to do about that unfinished Ocean Mile condo project that has shut down the circuit of "Racing in the Street"?

We're going to bring the circuit back with classic car cruises. We're going to do our own special events to bring the circuit back. We'll have different car shows, like the Rolling Thunder motorcycle shows. After church on Sundays, before "Asbury Nights," we want to give the place to local churches for gospel brunches. There'll be a lot of creative, innovative things that will kick this place like it's never been kicked before.

What have you heard about the boardwalk being open again like last summer?

I'll put it this way: we've always felt that we're going to be the thunder before the storm. The commitment from the governor's office is great. She does an annual Memorial Day opening of the summer season on the Jersey Shore. This year, she picked this place. The headline on the press release from the governor's office reads, "Whitman Rocks Asbury Park."

Do you have fond memories of Asbury Park from when you were a kid?

Of course. Who doesn't? That's why I'm here. You get a lot of "oohs and ahhs" out of Asbury Park. We're excited that we're going to be the ones to create that kind of excitement. People are going to tell my daughter, "Your daddy helped bring this place back." ➡

the backstreets jukebox

1. Various Artists
'Til We Outnumber 'Em
Righteous Babe (CD)
2. Jimmie Dale Gilmore
One Endless Night
Rounder (CD)
3. Steve Earle
Transcendental Blues
E Squared (CD)
4. Sleater Kinney
All Hands on the Bad One
Kill Rock Stars (CD)
5. Hot Snakes
Automatic Midnight
Sympathy For the Record Industry (CD)
6. Lou Reed
Ecstasy
Warner Bros. (CD)
7. Jeff Buckley
Mystery White Boy
Columbia (CD)
8. John Prine
John Prine Live
Oh Boy (CD)
9. Portastatic
De Mel, De Melão
Merge (CD)
10. Marah
Kids From Philly
E Squared (CD)

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today
and Everyday

ON THE LIVE WIRE:

As Bruce and the band wind down the tour, rumors have begun to abound about what comes next. Hopes are high that Bruce and the band will head into the studio, it seems more likely that a live album will be the next step. No official word at press time, but another live album is certainly overdue, and a release from this tour seems like a no-brainer. One clue: in early April, one source reported that in order to round out an upcoming live album, Bruce and the band would be focusing more on his later albums. Since then, "Better Days," "Lucky Town," and "Human Touch" have all made appearances in the set. . . . Speaking of live releases, we now have physical proof of an official video from the tour: a knockout double-page photo can be found in the Spring 2000 issue of *DoubleTake* magazine. The close-up shot of Nils, Clarence, Steve, Patti and Bruce singing "If I Should Fall Behind" is a frame credited as "From *If I Should Fall Behind*. A 16mm documentary" by director Jonathan Demme. Whether we will ever see it is another matter, but it was reported earlier that Demme shot a video for the song at the September 1999 Chicago stand. The article itself, "Directions to the Promised Land," by Daniel Wolff, is an excellent song-by-song review of the 9/21 Philly Spectrum show that delves deeper than most assessments, offering insight on the constructed "narratives" of Bruce's performances. Wolff, author of *You Send Me: The Life and Times of a Sam Cooke*, also discusses the work of The Kensington Welfare Rights Union, a charity foundation based in Philly that Bruce has supported. Check out www.doubletakemagazine.org for more info. . . . This is not *DoubleTake's* first look at Springsteen. A recently released anthology, *Writing Work: Writers on Working-Class Writing*, includes the previous *DoubleTake* interview Bruce did with Will Percy, the nephew of the late writer Walker Percy. The interview is a must-read in which Bruce discusses, among other things, the importance that "class consciousness" has had on

his writing. *Writing Work* is available through Bottom Dog Press, Firelands College, Huron, OH 44839. . . . On February 26, just before hitting the road for tour 2000, Springsteen and much of the E Street Band attended "An Evening to Remember," the annual benefit for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund. The fund supports sarcoma research as well as the needs of young cancer patients at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. To learn more about the KACF, or to get involved, call (212) 501-0748, or e-mail KACF@brickwallmgmt.com.

ACROSS THE SCREEN:

After years of resisting the lure of the silver screen—concert films aside—Bruce has finally made his acting debut. Springsteen has, over the years, reportedly rejected roles in such films as *Eddie and the Cruisers*, *Hair*, and a proposed remake of the Marlon Brando classic, *The Wild One*. But he apparently didn't need much convincing to make a cameo in the screen adaptation of Nick Hornby's best-selling novel, *High Fidelity*. As *Entertainment Weekly* reports, all it took was a call from the right guy: "John [Cusack] called Bruce, and for some reason he showed up," said co-screenwriter D.V. DeVincentis. Cusack told *USA Today* that he had met Springsteen once before and just decided to "throw a Hail Mary" and call him out of the blue. To his delight, Springsteen laughed and said yes. Hey John, how about asking him to start playing "Rosie." . . . Greg Mitchell, former editor of *Crawdaddy* magazine, has a new book out about coaching his son's little league baseball team. Mitchell recounts his own baseball experiences, mentioning throwing the ball around with the Boss, going to a Yankee game with him, and an "intense" softball doubleheader between the *Crawdaddy* team and the E Streeters, circa 1977. Universal Studios has optioned the book, *Joy in Mudville*, as a movie for Tom Hanks—so who knows, there may be more doors opening up for Bruce's acting career already.



Right: Springsteen raises a glass at the annual Kristin Ann Carr Fund benefit, 2/26/00.

FRIENDS OF TILLIE:

In Asbury Park, the campaign to preserve the Palace is heating up. City bureaucrats have tried to demolish the Palace three times since mid-1998, most recently with a demolition loan from the state of New Jersey. That's a concept that infuriates the Save Tillie campaign. "It is simply inconceivable," organizers said, "that New Jersey tax dollars may be used to wipe out a legendary Springsteen landmark that can be saved and restored." To prove their point, the campaign's website (www.homestead.com/savetillie/home.html) has the results of the first inspection of the Palace ever done by structural engineers with an expertise in historic buildings. Inspectors say the Palace urgently needs temporary waterproofing and bracing, but is a strong candidate for preservation. . . . The Palace has gained an unexpected supporter in the U.S. Post Office, which recently announced a special pictorial postmark, featuring Tillie as the centerpiece. . . . One of the strongest contributors to the fight to restore Asbury Park has been the Cleopatra Steps Out Gallery. A unique addition to Asbury Park's historic downtown district, the Gallery offers a great collection of hand-crafted gifts and art by Jersey artists. Since opening the gallery in 1996, husband-and-wife team Dave Christopher and Kate Mellina have done much to help rebuild the community, orchestrating city arts festivals and downtown clean-up efforts as well as helping in the fight to save Tillie and the Palace. Stop by when you're in the area—at 721 Cookman Ave.—or visit their website at www.cleopatrastepsout.com.



CLARENCE FOR PREZ:

In a story on the musical tastes of the presidential candidates, the *Washington Post* listed the 8/31/99 concert at the MCI center as Al Gore's top concert pick. The article noted that the usually reserved Vice President was said to be up on his feet dancing for the most of the concert—but it didn't shed any light on how the VP felt about Bruce giving his nod to Clarence: "Now, I normally don't endorse Presidential candidates. But there is a man here tonight who gets my support. He's done drugs, had sex, and plays a better sax!" . . . The *Post* also listed Bruce as a favorite of consumer activist Ralph Nader—whom, according to latest polls, Clarence is actually leading. . . . Country singer Trisha Yearwood offers a cover of "Sad Eyes" on her new album *Real Live Woman*, with Jackson Browne lending backing vocals. . . . Indie great Superchunk took requests over the internet for their latest tour, and there was a call for some Springsteen as they hit Hoboken. Superchunk's Mac McCaughan tells *Backstreets*, "We did 'Born to Run' at Maxwell's, and the kids loved it!" . . . Fans of Bruce Tunkel, former Red House lead singer, can keep up with him on his new web site at www.bruceunkel.com. And be sure to check out www.geocities.com/labambaandthehubcaps for the latest news on "the world's funkiest band." ➔

—Michael Newall

Straight Outta South Philly

Marah

By Bob Zimmerman

"...I've never tried too hard to like people who aren't into Springsteen. Our friendship could go nowhere and our future would be bleaker than 'The River.' It's fine—like what you like, and have a good life. No, me, I am into Springsteen. I am a fierce believer in the vision he's always trumpeted: that rock 'n' roll music could take us all higher emotionally and spiritually, that it could make the world a better place."

—Serge Bielanko of Marah, reviewing Springsteen and the E Street Band in Philadelphia, 1999

Ask almost any musical artist about a fate worse than death, and being compared to Bob Dylan or Bruce Springsteen is an answer that might pop up. How does a baby band trying to find their place in their hometown—let alone the world—compare to the Mount Rushmore of rock and roll? It's simple; they don't. Some bands exploit Springsteen's influence or friendship, or they hide their appreciation for Springsteen in a closet, deeper than their real demons.

Along comes a band from Philadelphia called Marah. They're more Jay Farrar than Springsteen, more Rolling Stones than E Street Band and more Mummers than Van Morrison. But it's in there. Marah has that passion, intensity, kick-ass live show and commitment to writing beautiful, heartfelt songs that's drawn so many to our boy Bruce. And at a time when it's hard to get rock stars to contribute to something as simple as a Springsteen tribute record, Marah would probably hand in an electric version of "Nebraska." The whole album, actually.

Marah recently released their second album, *Kids in Philly*, on Steve Earle's E-Squared label. Whereas their first album on Black Dog Records presented a band searching for a sound, *Kids in Philly* is a huge leap forward. Both music and lyrics are leaner, stronger and more focused.



The core of the band, the brothers Bielanko (Dave: lead vocals, guitar and banjo, and Serge: rhythm guitar, harmonica and backing vocals) were raised in Conshohocken, PA, about 11 miles outside of Philadelphia. Originally, Marah started as a trio, when Dave got together with original members, bassist Danny Metz and drummer Ronnie Vance. (Marah now consists of Mick Bader on drums, Joe Hoooven on bass, and rounding out and strengthening their sound, pedal steel/utility guitar player Mike Brenner) Catching one of their gigs soon after, Serge wanted in.

After recording their debut, *Let's Cut the Crap and Hook Up Later on Tonight*, Marah began to be courted by the record labels. According to Serge, they kept coming back to the independent E-Squared label, due to the lack of pressure as well as the constant support shown by label head Steve Earle.

"You know, we sat down with a lot of labels, but each and every time it just kept coming back to Steve's no-pressure way of handling things," Bielanko told *Back-*

streets. "We'd talk to him about everything, before we had signed anything, and he'd always tell us to do what's best for us. We talked to some labels, and after we'd tell them that we wanted to record ourselves, you could just see their eyes glaze over. Some of these guys couldn't even talk music. You'd mention a classic album like *Exile on Main Street*, and they wouldn't know what you were talking about. But Steve was always there for us, and it just worked out."

Like their debut, *Kids in Philly* was recorded in their rehearsal space in South Philly, above Frank's Auto. The new record gives a real sense of the duality of the Bielanko's city. They sing about a community they know, fear, and ultimately love; it's a place that's sadly beautiful.

It was while hanging out in South Philadelphia with Steve Earle at Geno's Steaks that Serge heard for sure that Springsteen and the E Street Band were going to be touring together again.

"We were at Geno's with Steve, and we were talking about the whole thing," Serge said, "and Steve told us, 'I can get you

tickets to see Springsteen.' I swear, we must have called Steve every week after that. We'd go, 'Have you talked to Bruce? Have you talked to [Jon] Landau?' Eventually Steve hooked us up for the first night. I was dead broke at the time. After that first Philly show I said there's no fucking way I can go to bed each night, knowing Bruce is playing a mile from my house each night. So, all in all, I went to five of the six nights. After the birthday show at the Spectrum, I had just barely enough money to catch the last show, and it was so unbelievable that I thought about going. But instead, I ordered Italian take-out and celebrated what I had just seen."

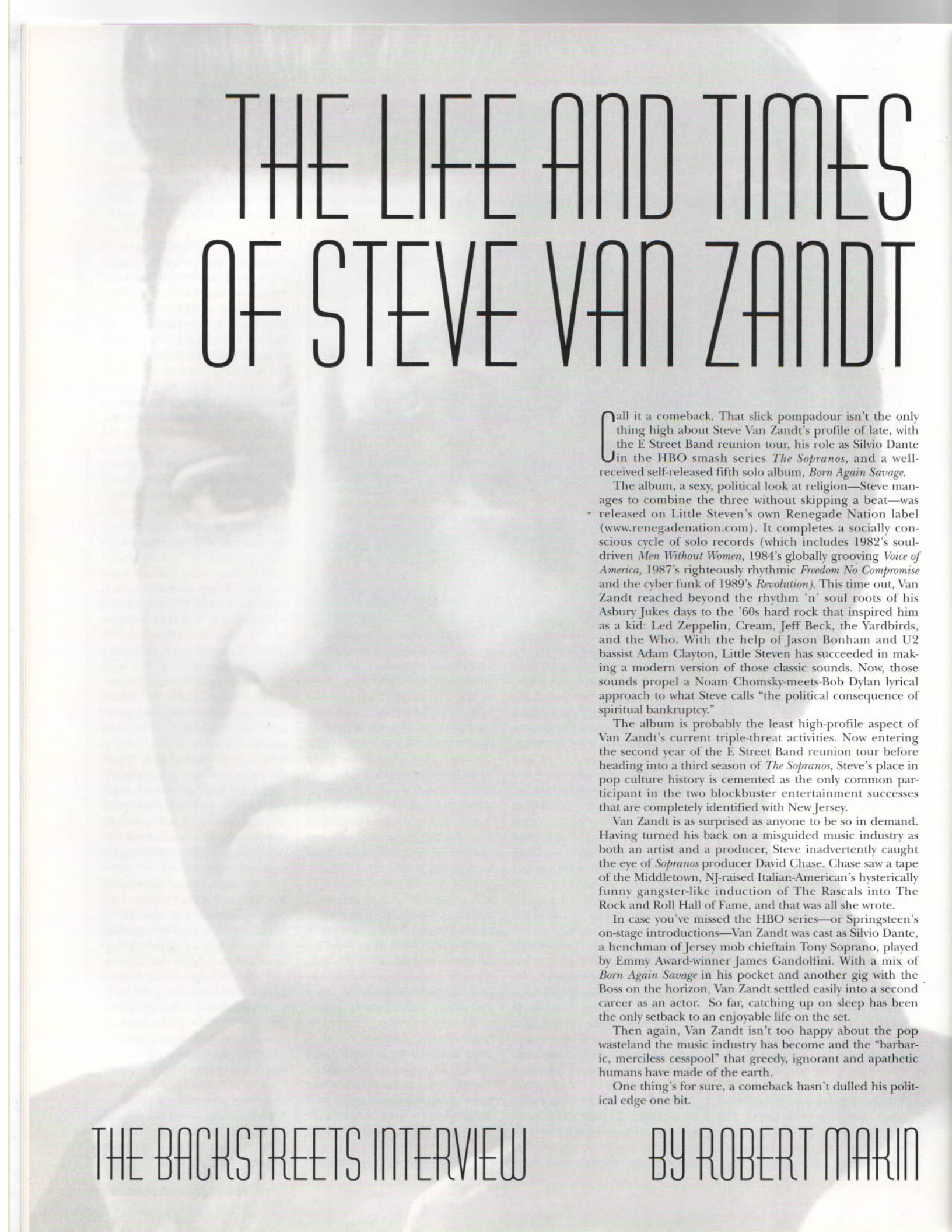
Something else fans of both artists might try to track down is Marah's cover of "Streets of Philadelphia," a B-side on their first single, "Point Breeze." A loose, bluegrass stab at Bruce's Oscar-winning tune has won over many fans—but not Serge.

"That song came from a World Café session we did that never aired," he explained. "The band was doing a version that was truer to the original after it first came out. I wish we had done it that way, but we were under deadline to get two B-sides. It was a sincere attempt at a tribute, but I'm afraid it ended up like one of those *Pickin' on Springsteen* records."

After talking more Springsteen for close to twenty minutes, I ask Serge if there's any fear of the Springsteen stigma being stuck to Marah. Greater bands haven't been able to shake the shadow, and yet the guys in Marah seem to take it all in stride.

"Hey, I know a lot of Springsteen fans, and I'd like to think that we're definitely in that tradition. Maybe we turn our guitars up a little louder. I'd like to think we're a part of that link to that great lost guitar album Bruce has been rumored to be working on for the last couple years, which I think he's completely capable of delivering." 🎸

JOHN FALLS PHOTO



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF STEVE VAN ZANDT

Call it a comeback. That slick pompadour isn't the only thing high about Steve Van Zandt's profile of late, with the E Street Band reunion tour, his role as Silvio Dante in the HBO smash series *The Sopranos*, and a well-received self-released fifth solo album, *Born Again Savage*.

The album, a sexy, political look at religion—Steve manages to combine the three without skipping a beat—was released on Little Steven's own Renegade Nation label (www.renegadenation.com). It completes a socially conscious cycle of solo records (which includes 1982's soul-driven *Men Without Women*, 1984's globally grooving *Voice of America*, 1987's righteously rhythmic *Freedom No Compromise* and the cyber funk of 1989's *Revolution*). This time out, Van Zandt reached beyond the rhythm 'n' soul roots of his Asbury Jukes days to the '60s hard rock that inspired him as a kid: Led Zeppelin, Cream, Jeff Beck, the Yardbirds, and the Who. With the help of Jason Bonham and U2 bassist Adam Clayton, Little Steven has succeeded in making a modern version of those classic sounds. Now, those sounds propel a Noam Chomsky-meets-Bob Dylan lyrical approach to what Steve calls "the political consequence of spiritual bankruptcy."

The album is probably the least high-profile aspect of Van Zandt's current triple-threat activities. Now entering the second year of the E Street Band reunion tour before heading into a third season of *The Sopranos*, Steve's place in pop culture history is cemented as the only common participant in the two blockbuster entertainment successes that are completely identified with New Jersey.

Van Zandt is as surprised as anyone to be so in demand. Having turned his back on a misguided music industry as both an artist and a producer, Steve inadvertently caught the eye of *Sopranos* producer David Chase. Chase saw a tape of the Middletown, NJ-raised Italian-American's hysterically funny gangster-like induction of The Rascals into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and that was all she wrote.

In case you've missed the HBO series—or Springsteen's on-stage introductions—Van Zandt was cast as Silvio Dante, a henchman of Jersey mob chieftain Tony Soprano, played by Emmy Award-winner James Gandolfini. With a mix of *Born Again Savage* in his pocket and another gig with the Boss on the horizon, Van Zandt settled easily into a second career as an actor. So far, catching up on sleep has been the only setback to an enjoyable life on the set.

Then again, Van Zandt isn't too happy about the pop wasteland the music industry has become and the "barbaric, merciless cesspool" that greedy, ignorant and apathetic humans have made of the earth.

One thing's for sure, a comeback hasn't dulled his political edge one bit.

THE BACKSTREETS INTERVIEW

BY ROBERT MAKIN

It's good to see you back in such a big way. It feels like I've definitely come out of retirement. That's what it feels like.

After five war cries for justice, how does it feel to be playing a gangster?

And meting out my own kind of justice? It's sort of revenge, you know. Obviously the two things don't relate to each other, but it is ironic.

Most musicians are hitting the sack around the time actors are hitting the set. What was that like when you were playing with Bruce and filming at the same time?

It's a shock to the system, but when you really love what you do, you just do it. I found that if you don't sleep, you really don't have to. It's amazing what you can do. But it does turn your whole schedule around. Last week, I started the week with a 5 o'clock call, which meant I had to get up at 3:30 in the morning. That's really pushing it. That is literally when I'd go to sleep on a normal day. But you just adjust and do it; don't worry about these petty concerns, like sleep and stuff like that.

But the work's got to be great. Don't get me wrong. You've got to love what you're doing, or else I think it'd be impossible.

What is the most fun you've had working on *The Sopranos*, and—other than losing sleep—what is the hardest part of it, particularly compared to making music?

The fun part is working with this specific group of people: the other actors, the writers, the crew, the producers, HBO. Everybody connected with this show is amazingly unified. We're all very friendly with each other. There's a lot of mutual respect. It's a tribute to David Chase, who hand-picked everybody. But I must say it's also a tribute to HBO, who I've never worked with before. I find them to be really extraordinary. They took care of everybody, and they allow David to have a lot of artistic freedom. I really respect that.

So that's the easy part: going to work everyday with those people. The hard part, aside from getting up every day—and aside from having to shave every day—which was, like, another shock—I guess it's the waiting around that goes on in any film production and, for the most part, can't be helped. I'm not really good at waiting around, but usually you find something to do.

Do you find yourself wanting to work on music in that down time?

You're not always near the trailer or where your dressing room would be. You're on the set sometimes for hours. If your cell phone's working, you can get something done. But you try to use the time. That's part of the routine that you just get into. You may be writing something or having a meeting or doing something on the phone. You just have to get used to that.

I think the other hard part is not seeing what you do until months later. That was the hardest adjustment to make.

There's not the immediate feedback of an audience.

Not only the audience, but even in the artistic process. In music, if you do a guitar solo in the studio, you come in and do it, and you say either, "that's fine" or "I can do this or that better," and you go right back in and you do it better. Here, you're very much dependent on the director, which is the first thing you have to get used to. You are not judging your work. The director is judging your work. That's the first thing. And then the second thing is that you don't get to see it until six months later. So any adjustments you're going to make, you're going to make the next season. You have to let that control thing go. You just gotta let it go.

Given that, it must be nice that you're working with your wife, Maureen, who's now playing your wife in the show.

Yeah, it's great that my wife's working on the show. I get to see her a little more often because we work 12-, 13-hour days regularly. So that's the best part about that.

Was it better this season working with Maureen?

It's a small part, so we haven't had a lot of scenes where we're interacting with each other. We haven't had a big scene like that yet. I hope we will next year.

The fact that *The Sopranos* is filmed and set in New Jersey—it's television instead of music, but it's almost like Bruce and the E Street Band all over again for what this show has done for New Jersey. And you're the only person involved with both.

It's very interesting to see it happen twice, when even once was a long shot. I think these are probably the only two things that have ever really made New Jersey part of their identity, Bruce and *The Sopranos*. Obviously, a lot of people are from Jersey, from Sinatra on down. But in these two cases, it really was an integral part of the identity, and it's fascinating that the same sort of thing happened 20 years later. When Bruce did it, everybody said, "this is really not a good idea." New Jersey is a kind of a joke. It's a laugh line in comedy routines. When Lou Costello wanted to get a laugh, he'd say he was from Paterson, NJ. It would get a big laugh.

This has more of a sense of pride.

Yeah, but it was an odd thing for Bruce to do. So Bruce proved that small-town identification could have universal appeal. This was really a new idea and one that was very much doubted by the powers that be. Here it comes, 25 years later, and the same thing happens. David Chase goes to the network, says he's going to shoot in New Jersey, and they laugh at him. They said, "No, no, no. We don't do that. We film in L.A.," and passed on the show. Eventually, thank God, HBO picked it up, and that's where it belongs. Because it's serious adult entertainment, which is rare.

It wouldn't be as powerful on the networks.

No, it really wouldn't be, and it certainly wouldn't be as realistic. So once again, New Jersey proves to be universal in an interesting way. But I think that people forget that whole identity of New Jersey being second best, the underdog. You're not New York, and you're not Philadelphia. You're in between. That whole working class thing is very true. There is a "trying harder" because you're from New Jersey. There's a need and an ambition to prove yourself. All those things are all in [*The Sopranos*]. And that's how most people are. Most people are in that position rather than identifying with the big guy and being number one. The guy who always wins, the hero. That classic, romanticized hero. That's what Hollywood portrays all the time, and TV even. The truth is, that's not where most people are at. And the people who run the industry forget that.

Let's talk about *Born Again Savage*. It's a continuation of your four previous politically-themed solo albums, yet it's a musical departure.

All five records are all different. They were all departures, which is not something I would recommend if you're trying to have a career. But I really didn't look at it that way. I didn't look at it as a career in which I would build up my audience and be a frontman. It was much more of an

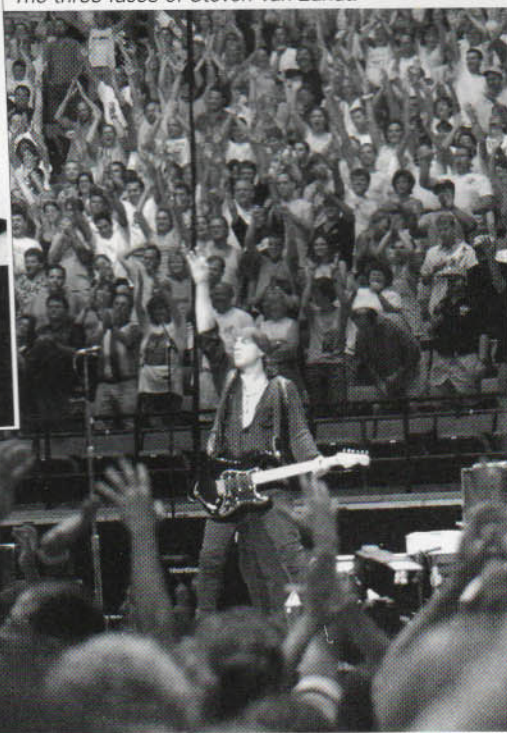
SILVIO



The Sopranos

Family. Redefined.
SUNDAYS AT 9PM/8C

The three faces of Steven Van Zandt.



artistic adventure and a journey to learn about myself and learn about what was going on in the world and write about it. The lyrics were very carefully planned out. I outlined the five records and the five themes. I knew they'd all be political records, but I had sub-themes on every one. Musically, I just went where I felt like going.

I started off with the identity I had established, really, with the Jukes: the combination of what we used to call R&B and soul and rock music, because that was my way of carving out a niche. I grew up in a time when every single artist had their own very distinct identity. I couldn't find it in traditional rock music, so I went that way. And I was very comfortable with that. Then the second record was very different. I started introducing a lot of world elements, like reggae, and salsa, and different things. My third record started go more towards international dance music. I started to have a more rhythm base on the bottom with the rock stuff on top. I continued to the extreme with that on my fourth album, which I didn't put out in America because I thought it would be too shocking for people who saw me as a rock artist. The fourth album had no rock element at all. It was that whole technology thing—what I called cyber-funk. It was all done on a computer. It was keyboard-oriented and very, very different. But I liked it.

But then having gone through that, I finally realized that I missed rock music. I missed hearing it and playing it for the first time. So finally with the fifth album I was able to do what I really thought I'd never be able to do, which was to make a really straight-ahead rock record, with guitar, bass, and drums, and yet maintain my identity. So I'm very proud of that. It's a bit of a surprise, actually.

It was neat to read what you had to say in the liner notes about the bands that influenced you before you formed the Jukes. A lot of their sounds resurface here, like Zeppelin and Cream, the whole Yardbirds thing. I sometimes enjoy just getting lost in the connection between the Yardbirds, Cream, Jeff Beck, that whole thing.

It was something that was really important to me as a kid. And then I just kind of let it go because I felt like, what can I possibly contribute to

that? I mean, it's really all been done. It literally took 28 years before I found a way to do it.

How often did you work on *Born Again Savage* since *Revolution* was released in 1989?

I wrote it right away in '89, really. I just kind of casually demoed over it '90, '91. I didn't record it until the mid-'90s somewhere. I don't even remember. I only recorded it then because I found some real motivation and inspiration from Adam Clayton, who I had happened to run into. I was like, "I've got this record, and I'm finally thinking of recording it." He was like, "I'm in, man. Let's do it." And that was really a cool thing. We had been friends a long time, but it was fun to work with him. Then I called Jason Bonham, who I didn't know but just felt was the perfect drummer for this record. I was really consciously making a modern version of a '60s hard rock record. I thought: here's a guy who has the historical knowledge to do the right thing.

He's John Bonham's kid.

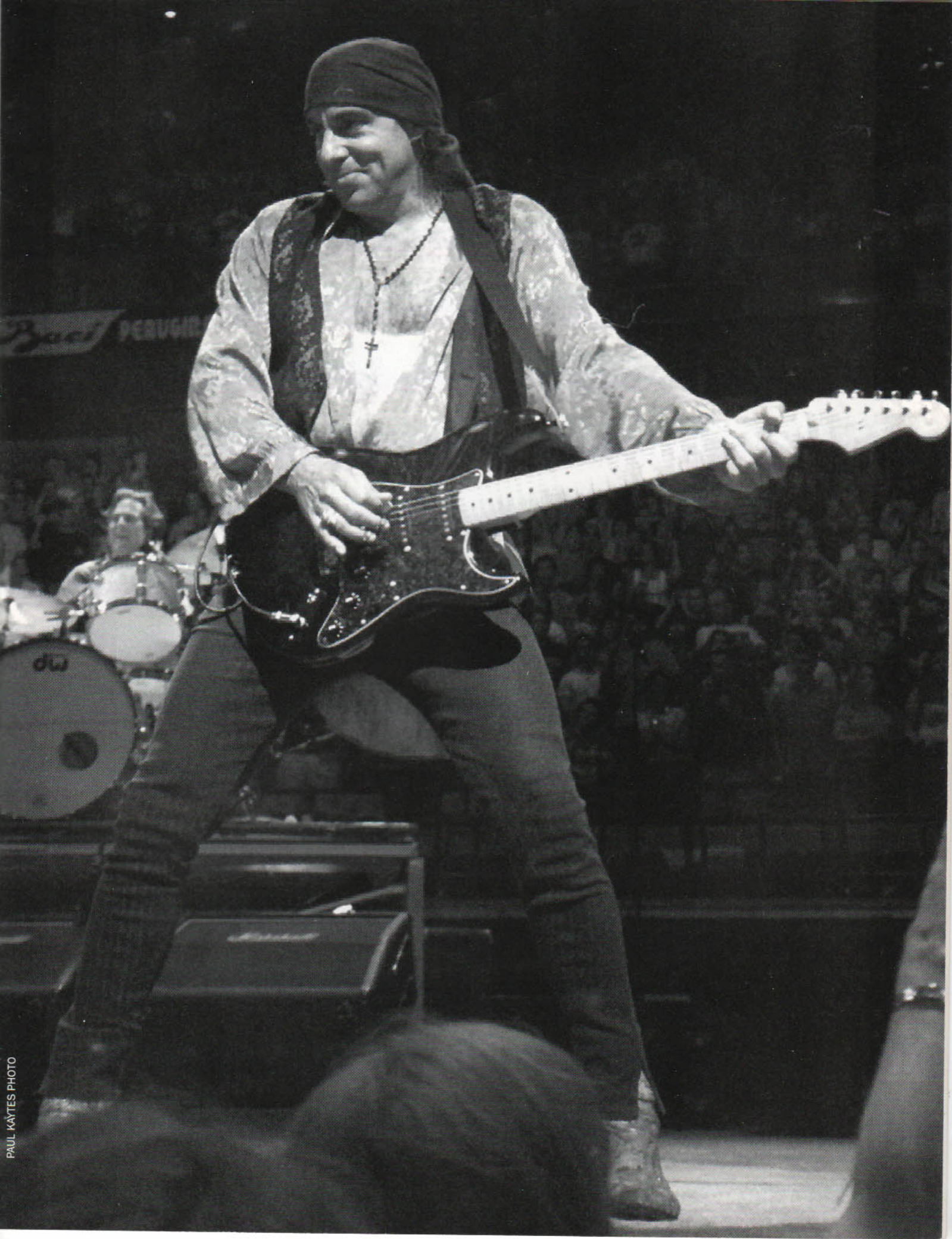
Yeah. I wouldn't have to show him every riff I want. It was all built-in, so it was very cool. That was very inspiring at a time when I was very disconnected from the whole music world.

Even having recorded [the album], I then remixed it three or four times up until this past year. When I got a good mix, I could finally put it out, but I really remained disconnected from the music business until this internet thing started to happen. That really was the final push to put it out. I thought, "Well, here's a good way to put it out without being a part of the music business." I don't really relate to it, and they don't relate to me, and that's okay. I'm not in any way angry about that. I have a lot of friends who work at record companies. I have a lot of friends who run record companies. I just realized that I'm in a different business than they are.

I grew up at a time when rock became an art form. I've always taken it very seriously. Now that we've returned to a pop era, I really don't belong there. So here with the internet, great: I could stick it out and



RENE VAN DIEMEN PHOTO



PAUL KATZ PHOTO

not have to worry about people losing their jobs because the record doesn't sell enough. Then when people started hearing it, they were like, "Oh man, this has *got* to be in the stores..." (laughs) because everybody doesn't have a computer. So now it's in stores.

I have to ask you about the inspiration for two of the songs on there, especially "Saint Francis." Was it inspired by the experience you had in the Sahara in 1990, visiting the Saharawi people who were at war with Morocco?

It was certainly reinforced by that. I had the outline before then and had the thing pretty far along, but that was an extraordinary experience that just reinforced all my spiritual thoughts. It's difficult to write a song about that subject of the ecology or whatever you'd want to call it. I found myself doing it as a science fiction, post-apocalyptic scenario. Then combining the very traditional identity of "Saint Francis" with that modern apocalypse. I liked the juxtaposition of that, and the basic device of writing about something without being too specific about it. It seemed the most effective way.

What about "Face of God"?

The main subject of the record is religion, but it does interweave religion with politics and with sex. I use sex in various ways on the record. In one sense, it's proof of divinity. I use it as one of the portals to the eternal. That's one of the metaphors in that song. It's three different vignettes relating to a common chorus. The second vignette is specifically taken from an old Buddhist story of the wisdom as it is embodied in an older priest and the young girl, and that exchange of sexuality for knowledge, and how they interrelate. It's various ways of catching that glimpse of the face of God. It could be looking at flower or a newborn baby. It can be many things, and I would include sex on that list.

Over the years, as your political knowledge grew, did you find that your spiritual knowledge grew?

Yeah. Yeah, there's a point where it all very much started to integrate: my political thoughts, my philosophical thoughts, my spiritual thoughts, social justice. It all sort of merged. It happened effortlessly, just by going from one subject to the other in a natural path. It all started to merge, which makes this record's subject the political consequence of spiritual bankruptcy. But in fact, it's also a bit of summing up of everything I know and have done.

Does having your own label free you up to say whatever you want?

Yeah, and that's one of the advantages of it. But in my case, to be honest, I always had that freedom. That's a prerequisite for me. I just wouldn't do it otherwise. I've always had complete freedom. But certainly that is true for any artist who wants to do that.

Would *Born Again Savage* have come out if not for the success of the E Street Band reunion and *The Sopranos*, or would you have released it anyway?

It was all very weirdly coincidental. I had the record and I was just getting a mix that I liked. But I still didn't know what I was going to do with my life. I had produced a few things in the early '90s. I thought for a minute I was going to back and do that. I had produced my friends, but I was never really a traditional, professional record producer full time. I thought maybe that's what I'd do. I did three or four records in the early '90s.

I remember the Arc Angels record was really good.

I also did an African guy from Nigeria called Majek Fashek. I did the Southside Johnny reunion record, *Better Days*. I did a punk record, *Demolition 23*. All of which were different and very, very good. I had finally gotten comfortable at being a producer in a more traditional sense. I'd always experimented a bit; I stopped experimenting and started making good records. And in every case, the record company would screw up the marketing, or this would happen or that would happen. Then I started meeting with a few new groups and found that my sensi-

bility was really too different to bridge the gap. I'm very different about these things—I do not walk into a studio without ten good songs. And people would look at me like I was crazy. They were like, "Ten good songs? That's five albums' worth! Nobody puts out more than two good songs on a record." I was like, "You know what? This ain't for me." I'm not going to sit around arguing with people about realizing one's potential. It was like talking to the wall.

So I had given up on that idea. I was adrift without knowing what I was going to do, when out of nowhere, David Chase calls and says, "Do you want to be an actor?" If it didn't happen to me, I wouldn't believe it. It's one of those kinds of stories. I'm living proof that it ain't over 'til it's over.

So we did the pilot, and just as the first season was coming on, Bruce decided to do the reunion. All of a sudden, everything was happening at once.

To hear you talk about the music business, it sounds just like Southside Johnny. He has the same things to say. He's made a record produced by Garry Tallent that he's going to put out on the Internet. Have you heard anything about that?

No, I very rarely see him. I wasn't aware of that, but that's good.

In this pop era, do you think that rock is dead or just hibernating?

Those kind of terms are how record companies would categorize it. The rock era is dead. The rock era, beginning when rock became an art form in 1965 or so, which we thought would last forever, did not last forever. It ended around '94 or '95.

When Kurt Cobain died?

Yeah, I would say from "Like a Rolling Stone" to Kurt Cobain's death was the rock era at which time rock music absolutely informed the culture. It was an integral and important part of the culture. Everyday it influenced everything. The importance of music has been diluted to the point where it is simply not important in terms of the culture. Now, that doesn't mean there aren't

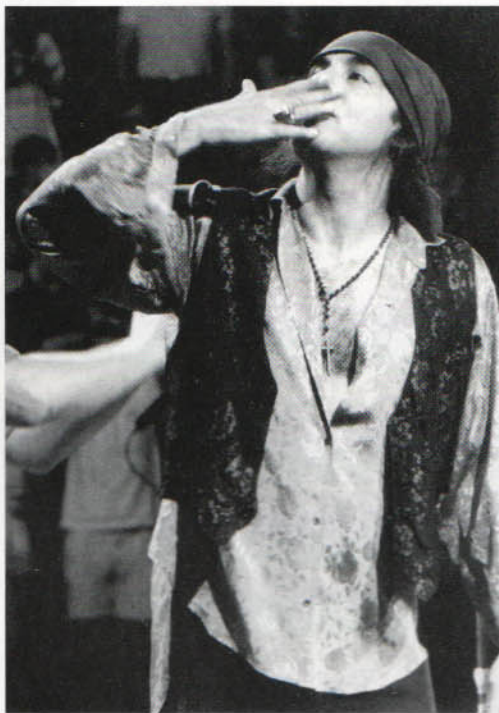
good rock bands that are very dedicated, like Metallica. You're gonna have that. But they started in the rock era, too. We've yet to see a post-rock era rock band connect that way. Hopefully we will, but it will never be the same. It will never be a mass shared experience. Not for a long time to come—because the infrastructure that sustained the rock era is gone, starting with radio. You need local and regional radio for that. You need DJs who have the freedom to play whatever they want. That's gone at the moment. The club structure is different. A lot of clubs ask the artist to play before they play.

There are no more Hullabaloes, the kind of teen clubs where you and Bruce got your start before the Upstage.

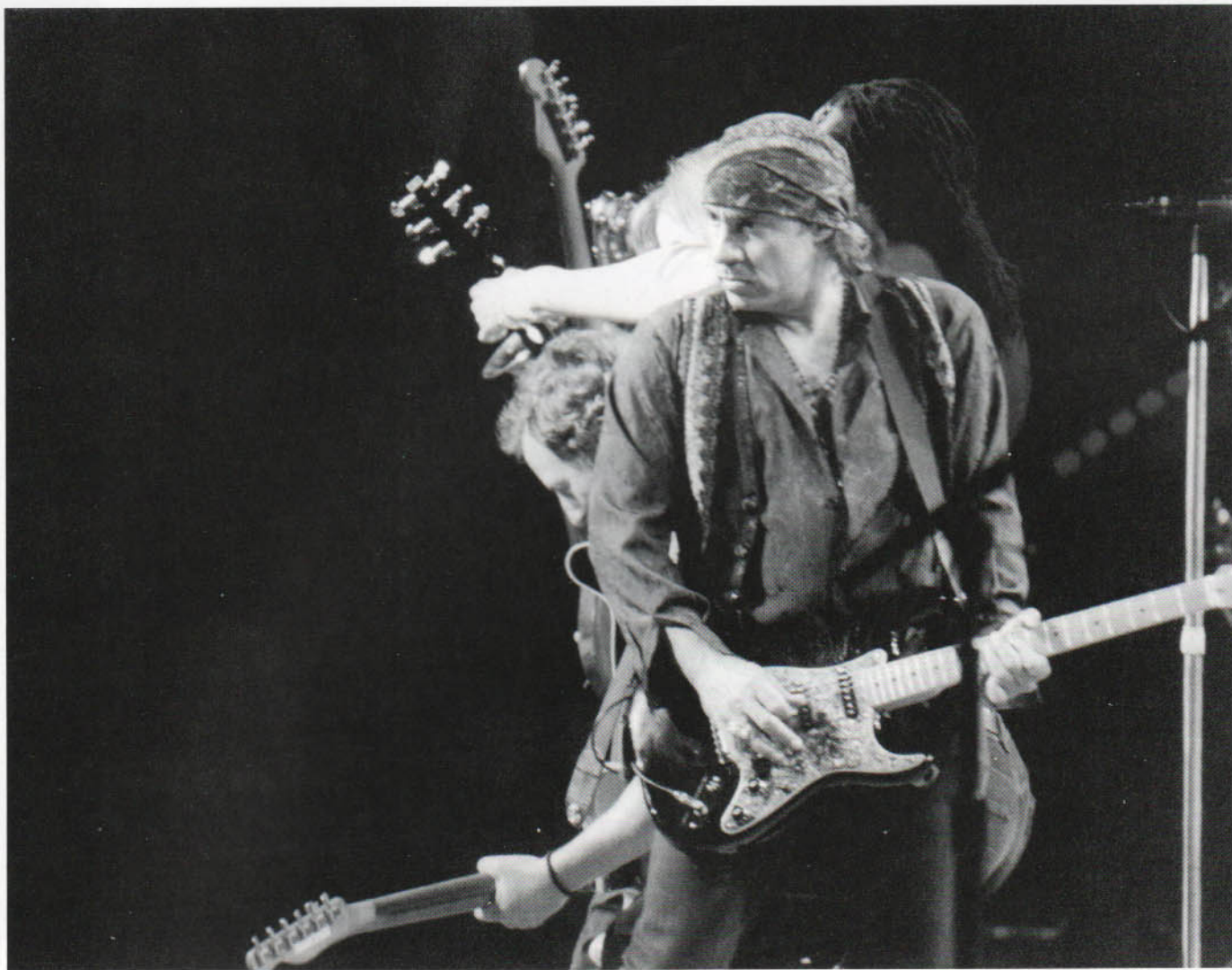
A lot of the clubs are closed or don't pay enough. The theater level is largely gone. And now with SFX buying up all the promoters, the desire to bring along a new band—that's gone. Plus the inability for people to be good performers because of the importance of MTV. All these things add up. It's much, much more difficult now to be a rock band and sustain it. That's not to say it won't happen. I hope it will. You're seeing it happen in a different way with people like Rage Against the Machine. If they can keep it together, that'll be great. But it's a lot harder.

It's also gone underground. There are all these jam bands that don't sell many records on their own labels, yet they sell out what few theaters are left.

Well, that's it. It's become almost an underground philosophy rather than a way of making a living. And the fragmentation will continue. It's an extraordinarily fragmented world beginning at radio, and I think that will continue now with the Internet. Everybody is going to have their own radio show, their own record label, their own TV show eventually—which is great, but you have to keep your expectations much, much lower and realize that the audience is going to be much, much smaller. That's okay. It just requires an adjustment. But I don't think we're going to have as much of that mass appeal.



RENE VAN DIEMEN PHOTO



No Elvis, no Bruce.

It's going to be tough as far as important artists. What I would call important artists. You're always going to have that stuff with pop with kids, but it doesn't matter. It's just wallpaper. This week's lollipop.

What are the future plans for Renegade Nation?

We'll see. At the moment, there are no big plans. I'm trying to get my old masters back. I'd like to put out the Demolition 23 record, which was a traditional punk record in a Ramones/Sex Pistols style. We took it around to record companies I guess six months before Green Day broke and were told that punk was out of fashion. But it's a very good record. I'm really very happy with that record. I'd like to put that out. I may make *Revolution* available, even though it's 180 degrees different from *Born Again Savage*. If by chance this thing sustains itself, I could start thinking about maybe putting out new artists. But I'm not quite looking at it that way yet. At the moment, it's just a vehicle for this album.

What about a sixth non-political album?

I don't know. I've got one written. We'll see. I haven't really thought seriously past *Savage*. I don't know what I'll do.

What have you enjoyed most about being back with the E Street Band? What's the best thing you've taken back home with you?

Just the fact that we were able to do it again so well, so effectively, 20 years later. It's something you sort of fantasize about, the fact that you can grow older and still be not only as good as you were, but *better*. I think we're all better, and I think the band is better. It's the best we've ever been. I think that says something about longevity that's important.

Regardless of what the record companies say.

That's the thing. We really were always to the left of the record busi-

ness. We were really show business-related. We started off as performers. We did that for ten years before we ever got into the music business. So we came in with a certain strength that stayed with us all these years. As long as you keep the attitude—man, when we go on stage, we want to be the best thing that anyone's ever seen. As long as you can maintain that, you're gonna keep your standards high. I think we've proven that.

Do you think that you'll continue to work together? Maybe record?

Yes, I do. It's always going to be tricky logistically with my show and Max [Weinberg]'s show [*Late Night with Conan O'Brien*], but I think eventually we probably will do a record. We haven't talked about it yet, but I think it's inevitable. I think it's the final step in this reunion process.

When you put out *Voice of America* and *Sun City*, you had hoped that the world might evolve into a better place. Do you still have that hope, or do you think that the corporate power structure has too much power over the people? Is it too little too late?

I always have hope. As dark as my stuff can be—any stuff that's reality-based has to be dark, because it is pretty ugly out there—at the bottom of it all, I always maintain a sense of optimism and hope. I think we need encouragement for people to become their own heroes and to learn about themselves and to realize that potential. That's a message that's very consistent across all my work. In other words, taking the power away from those who you would rely on and being a little more self-sufficient. I think people have to find their own identity and position in the world. I've pretty much said that on every record.

So yeah, there haven't been any real changes as far as increased democracy or any of that, and most of the world is suffering as much or more than ever. Maybe it will come in the form of new technology. Maybe this internet thing will connect internationally a little more directly. That can only be a good thing. But there's always a hope. ➤

U.S. TOUR 2000



ROCK 'N' ROLL EXORCISM

The 1999 tour has rolled into 2000, and by the time this year's leg is over, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band will have brought their "meeting in the town" to 28 more towns in just a few months. The rock and roll exorcism currently on the road is there to help "get all the bad things out," as Bruce put it onstage. And the primary ailment plaguing fans for some time—the burning questions like "when are they coming to Texas?" and "will they ever play Canada?"—was expelled when the current itinerary was announced in January.

Unlike the numerous multi-night stands of 1999, the 2000 North American tour has brought a lot of one-nighters to previously neglected

areas: from South Florida to the Pacific Northwest, from fan strongholds like Pittsburgh to the fan backwoods of Arkansas; and finally across the border to the Great White North. The ministry of Reverend Springsteen knows it ain't just people in major metropolitan areas that need re-liberating. Bruce's show in Little Rock was been far from sold out. But faith was rewarded with the surprising tour debut of "Mary Queen of Arkansas," last performed in 1974.

The most interesting developments for tour-watchers came from behind closed doors. The band's soundchecks—occasionally witnessed by a lucky few, but regularly heard from the wrong side of concrete

arena walls—have been the most tantalizing yet.

Historically, Springsteen has often tried out new material on an audience: future album tracks like "Jungleland" and "Sherry Darling"; "tour specials" like "Man at the Top" and "Sugarland"; and, more recently, "Sell It and They Will Come" and "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love." Aside from "Land of Hope and Dreams," played nightly since the tour began, Springsteen has yet to perform a new song for a paying crowd. But look to the soundchecks: "Further On Up the Road" is the title fans gave one song. Another unnamed tune has reportedly been worked on as well.

It may be just a matter of time before such songs make the set. These late-afternoon workouts were often a glimpse of things to come. "Human Touch" was soundchecked for over a month before the lucky Pittsburgh audience heard the song's E Street Band debut. At times, gratification was immediate: "Roulette" turned up in the soundcheck on May 8 in Hartford, and the song made its tour debut—in the lead-off slot, no less—that night (for the record, Bruce and the band worked up "Roulette" at soundcheck a year ago in London. It made it as far as the set list for the show at Earl's Court on 5/23/99 but was scotched at the last minute).

Other times, a soundcheck revealed what might have been—missed opportunities, even—as in Memphis. The beautiful one-off of "Follow That Dream" in the show made it hard to complain, but Chuck Berry's "Memphis" and Bruce's own "I'm Turning Into Elvis" were in the band's pocket on the afternoon of the show.

In a way, the soundchecks are to recent concerts what old studio outtakes were to Springsteen's released albums. Now that we've been given *Tracks*, fans have to have something to pine for, right? We've included notable soundcheck highlights on the following pages.

Clearly, the soundchecks are only part of the story—and a small part, considering the consistently dynamic 3-hour concerts that Bruce ultimately plays. But as we wind our way toward the closing run at Madison Square Garden, part of the story they're telling could be billed "Coming Attractions." From "Lion's Den" in State College to "Roulette" in Hartford, thunder certainly is rolling down the tracks.

—Christopher Phillips and Jonathan B. Pont

BRYCE JORDAN CENTER STATE COLLEGE, PA FEBRUARY 28



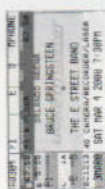
SETLIST: Lion's Den/The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Incorporated/Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The first concert of 2000. The U.S. debut of "Lion's Den" is played in honor of the Penn State Nittany Lions. Fortunately for fans, plenty of tickets are available outside the venue, which will be the case at virtually every stop on this leg.

PRESS: "BOSS' AND BAND JAM AT BRYCE JORDAN CENTER." Ryan Dougherty in the *Centre Daily Times*: More than 20 years since his last visit to Happy Valley, "The Boss" was welcomed back with open arms and thunderous applause at the Jordan Center. The first stop of Bruce Springsteen's long-awaited 24-city tour with the E Street Band was played in front of a frenzied crowd that spent most of the evening on its feet and with hands clapping.

Springsteen asked the crowd if it was "ready to roll," then said, "I'm so glad to be here tonight in the shadow of Mount Nittany." Then, sure enough, Springsteen tore into "Lion's Den," to open the show... "Good evening, Happy Valley," he said with a sly grin. "I'm feeling pretty happy, too."

ORLANDO ARENA ORLANDO, FL MARCH 4

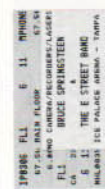


SOUNDCHECK: Includes "The Fever."
SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze Out/Where the Bands Are/She's the One/Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: In the crowd: Diamond Dallas Page.

WORLD OF HOPE AND DREAMS: In terms of the setlist, there wasn't anything too rare. But the intensity level of the band and the crowd made for a good mix (perhaps it was all of the NY/NJ fans that had come down to sunny Florida for a Saturday show and some Spring Training games). Bruce and the band had had four days off, which seemed to do wonders. Bruce introduced Steve as "the only man to get thrown out of Disneyland—it's true, I was there and I had to leave. Solidarity, brother!" There was also a reference to Disneyland—but shouldn't it be Disney World?—in "Light of Day." —Scott Neal

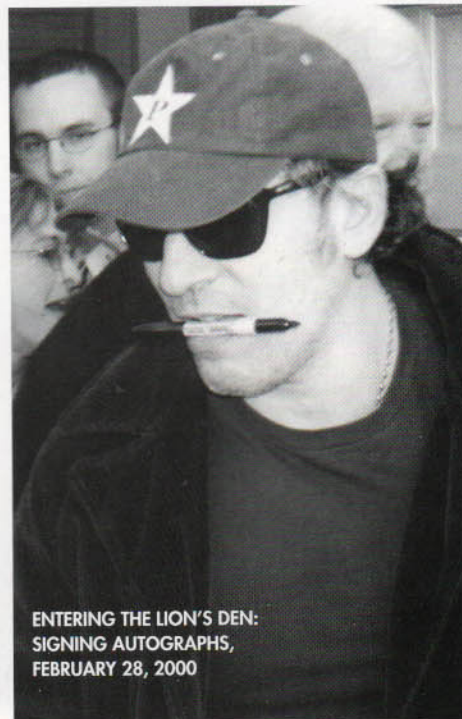
ICE PALACE ARENA TAMPA, FL MARCH 6



SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: "Light of Day" finds people "lost at Sea World!" In the crowd: Ed Sciahy, Stephen King, Hulk Hogan, Paul O'Neill.

KEEP ON PUSHING: Bruce dedicated "If I Should Fall Behind" and "Land of Hope and Dreams" to Curtis Mayfield, whose "music inspired these two songs, and his music served as the soundtrack to the Civil Rights movement". Springsteen also spoke out



DAVID BOTTIMORE PHOTO

ENTERING THE LION'S DEN:
SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS,
FEBRUARY 28, 2000

against Florida Governor Jeb Bush's "One Florida" plan, which would ban consideration of race and gender for admission into Florida's public universities and for state contracting decisions. —Randy Griffey

NCR CENTER FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 2 NIGHTS

MARCH 9 FT. LAUDERDALE / NIGHT 1



3/9 SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Brilliant Disguise," "Tougher Than the Rest," "Don't Look Back," and "No Surrender."

3/9 SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Ave Freeze-out/Brilliant Disguise/She's the One/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

3/9 NOTES: The long-overlooked *Tunnel of Love* album is represented with the U.S. tour debut of "Brilliant Disguise," last played nearly a year before in Bologna. On the setlist but not played: "Atlantic City," "Darlington County," "My Hometown" and "No Surrender." In the crowd: Dan Marino, on the eve of his retirement, which dominated the press the next day.

AS THE BAND PLAYS: "Light of Day" contained the now-common Florida references to Disney and Shamu, but added Bruce's new declaration that this would be a "rock 'n' roll exorcism." "Brilliant Disguise" was special for more than its perfect pairing with "She's the One." Seeing Patti and Bruce dominate the mics and stage the same as they had in

TOUR REPORT COMPILED BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

BUT WHEN WE DO THIS...
MARCH 10, 2000



March 1988, with so much water under their collective bridge, was very moving. Bruce looked the same, sans bolo tie and fancy chrome-toed cowboy boots. A dozen years and three children later, Patti also looked much the same—minus the heart-stopping mini and that *Tunnel of Love* full-bodied strawberry-blond mane. Yet, despite the baggage the song carries, there they were, letting us share their magic moments once again. —Bill Daverne

MARCH 10 FT. LAUDERDALE / NIGHT 2

3/10 SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Lucky Town," "Tougher Than the Rest," and "Human Touch."

3/10 SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/My Hometown/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Tougher Than the Rest/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Bobby

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Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

3/10 NOTES: Another rare one from *Tunnel*: "Tougher Than the Rest." Plus the first "My Hometown" this tour with Patti onstage, and the first "Meeting" since Oakland. "Light of Day" includes some "Wooly Bully."

FUZZY HEARTS: Two heart-shaped pillows connected by a string—a la "Roll of the Dice"—were thrown on stage during "Two Hearts"; Steve hung them around Bruce's neck as they finished the song. Roy had a rare moment at the mic, as Bruce coaxed the Professor to take a vocal turn on "Out in the Street," and the multi-talented Nils Lofgren rushed over to fill in on piano. Bruce invokes Curtis Mayfield once again, with an explicit call to maintain affirmative action. —David Anthony

REUNION ARENA DALLAS, TX MARCH 13

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Human Touch."

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Hungry Heart/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Cadillac Ranch

NOTES: "Light of Day" again incorporates "Wooly Bully." In the crowd: Troy Aikman, Weird Al Yankovic.

HEAVEN HERE ON EARTH: Most shows from this tour have had six songs in the encore and the show always seems to end too soon. For the Dallas show we got no less than eight encore songs, including "Cadillac Ranch," which he said he couldn't leave Texas without performing. He even changed the line to "even Troy Aikman in that black Trans-Am."

—Tom Friedrich

ALLTEL ARENA NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR MARCH 14

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Pink Cadillac" and "Stand on It."

SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Atlantic City/Darlington County/Factory/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/Mary Queen of Arkansas/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: "Mary Queen of Arkansas" is played for the first time in over a quarter-century (last played March 11, 1974), in a full-band acoustic arrangement. Local references abound: "Is the President in the House?" In the crowd: Mary Steenburgen.

PRESS: "HALF-CAPACITY CROWD DOESN'T KEEP SPRINGSTEEN FROM GIVING A-I SHOW." Jack W. Hill in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*: "...Though no one would mistake the show for a sell-out, neither should anyone assume that Springsteen and the E Street Band would deliver less than a top-shelf performance because of the size of the crowd—7,448, or less than half-capacity...."

And though many might not have appreciated the moment, some were in awe that Springsteen would perform his obscure gem, "Mary Queen of Arkansas," from his first album. While this was a real treat for those who discovered him at the start of his career, chances are many in the audience didn't even understand what they were hearing, let alone savor its implications—this song, performed solo on acoustic guitar and harmonica, is for you, people of Arkansas....

THE REAL QUEEN OF ARKANSAS: The fact that Springsteen did not sell out the new arena (a week after Britney Spears did) was a sore spot to a large number of Boss fans. One local popular radio morning show host bemoaned the fact that Springsteen only played one bona-fide hit ("Born to Run") and said the show wasn't worth the ticket price, which resulted in a huge number of on-air phone calls from

RENÉ VAN DIEMEN PHOTO

other concert-goers basically telling the guy he was an idiot.

The crowd was very much into it, and "Mary, Queen of Arkansas" was indeed a highlight. A lot of folks in the crowd yelled "Thanks, Bruce" at the song's end. All in all, a great but bittersweet, show. Little Rock has waited years for a state-of-the-art arena, and when the biggest show finally hits town, it's greeted with apathy. You've got to think this was Springsteen's last Arkansas appearance, and that's too bad. It's Arkansas' loss. —Rob Grace

PYRAMID ARENA MEMPHIS, TN MARCH 18



SOUNDCHECK: "I'm Turning into Elvis" and Chuck Berry's "Memphis."

SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/Follow That Dream/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: The beautiful tour premiere of "Follow That Dream." Lines from Elvis's "Guitar Man" are added to the start of "Working on the Highway."

ELVIS IS EVERYWHERE: The main pre-show speculation regarded what Elvis song or songs might the band perform. Would it be a medley? The chosen one was "Follow That Dream," which Bruce introduced as "one of my favorite Elvis songs," allowing that the band hadn't rehearsed it. "We don't need no stinkin' practice," he thundered with a smile. The crowd cheered enthusiastically. And then we heard an absolutely great rendition, dedicated to the Memphis area food bank, with Bruce in fine voice.

The Elvis references were everywhere in this show. At the end of "Badlands," after asking whether anyone was alive, Bruce asked: "Is Elvis in the building tonight?" In "Tenth Avenue," Bruce called on "the spirits of Elvis, Sam and Dave, and Rufus Thomas." In "Light of Day" people were "lost in Elvis memorabilia" (and given all the Bruce fans sighted at Grace-land that day, this was no doubt true). "Land of Hope and Dreams" was dedicated to Elvis and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Ramrod" sizzled once again, with a lyrical alteration to "meet me tonight down on Beale Street." —Bill Daverne

NEW ORLEANS ARENA NEW ORLEANS, LA MARCH 19



SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Adam Raised a Cain/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Darlington County/Factory/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: A few lines from Gary U.S. Bonds' "New Orleans" are worked into the show's intro, and "Light of Day" adds a call-and-response "Iko Iko." "Ramrod" namechecks Bourbon Street. Plus the 2000 tour debuts of "Adam" and "Spirit in the Night."

PEPSI CENTER DENVER, CO 2 NIGHTS

MARCH 30 DENVER / NIGHT 1



3/30 SOUNDHECK: Features Steve on lead vocals, with Bruce absent.

3/30 SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

THE DRIVING SNOW: For tonight's show it was nearly "Steve Van Zandt and the E Street Band." Steve led the boys through the soundcheck, as Bruce and Patti had missed their flight from Los Angeles; a charter was quickly arranged, and Bruce and Patti high-tailed it into a blizzard-white Denver, charging through pre-show traffic (led through town by the Denver police) to arrive in the building at the precise moment the show was billed to start. Bruce and the band hit the stage at 8:26 p.m., and few in the building knew when he said "I'm so glad to be in Denver" just how much he meant it!

"Ramrod" led off the encores, and instead of the usual lines about a cold morning in New Jersey, Bruce localized his reprise patter as the white stuff blanketed the parking lot outside: "It's a cold morning in Denver. I think I see Sasquatch out there!"

—Bill Daverne

MARCH 31 DENVER / NIGHT 2

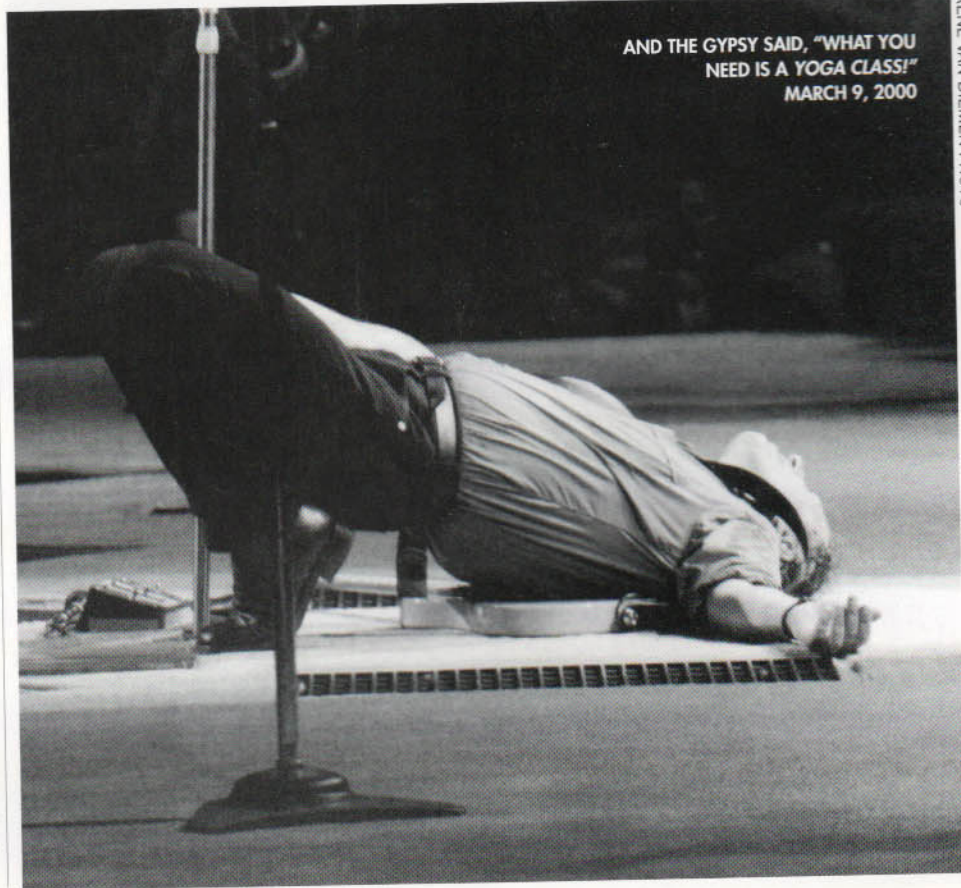


3/31 SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Rendezvous/Darlington County/Factory/My Hometown/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

3/31 NOTES: "Human Touch" is on the setlist, but replaced in the show by "Because the Night."

ROCK-Y RACCOON: The second Denver show was again solid, but was most notable for Patti's debut in joining Bruce in pelvic thrusting during "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" and Bruce's crazed Davy Crockett bit during "Ramrod." After Bruce asks his nightly "May I, baby?" and pelvic thrusts toward a woman in the audience, Patti hands her guitar to Bruce, raises her arms, places her hands behind her head, and gives a supple pelvic thrust towards a lucky man in the front row.

Later, as everyone runs for their instruments on "Ramrod," Bruce looks down at the coonskin cap worn by perpetual front-row fan Obie and says with a manic gleam in his eye: "Gimme that hat!" And then follows one of the funniest and finest performances of the whole tour: Bruce, the coonskin cap pulled down almost over his eyes, going nose-to-nose with an eye-spinning Steve Van Zandt. It's raucous. The coon tail is flopping over Bruce's right ear, and then he starts swatting at Steve with the tail as they play and attempt to outdo each other. Suddenly it's 1978 all over again, and Bruce and Steve are kids in a musical sandbox. After this unique version of "Ramrod," Bruce gently hands the coonskin cap back to a delighted Obie and thanks the crowd "for two great nights." —Bill Daverne



AND THE GYPSY SAID, "WHAT YOU
NEED IS A YOGA CLASS!"
MARCH 9, 2000

RENÉ VAN DIEMEN PHOTO

Among the shows I saw on the *Tom Joad* tour were Portland and Seattle. I was especially impressed with the show in Portland. Bruce was in great form, loose enough to joke about having gotten married there once. Humor aside, the lasting memory is the dead quiet in the hall throughout the performance. The Portland audience were true collaborators and the music that night sounded especially resonant.

A similar spirit was greeted Bruce and the E Street Band for their first show in the Rose City since 1980. This time, the quiet seemed more like a stillness that enveloped the Rose Garden whenever the music called for it. "The River" stood out, as Bruce got a chance to extend its ending. "The Ghost of Tom Joad" and the surprise addition of "Dead Man Walkin'" enjoyed similar respect. No one running for the exits in the Great Northwest. Earlier, Bruce honored a fan with a sign, calling the band's attention to it and adding "Rendezvous." Evidently, respect goes both ways in Portland.

Tacoma was remarkable for an energetic, nearly-flawless performance. Although the set list was another "night A," disappointment in missed variety was fleeting. You know Clarence Clemons is having a strong run when he steps up for his signature song on back-to-back nights, and the final resounding booms of "Jungleland" had the wooden rafters of the Tacoma Dome shaking as they had back in 1984. "Because the Night" was the highlight: Little Steven added feedback in the beginning of the song as he did in 1978, and Bruce stood in one spot for an extended, surging lead before the last chorus. No ill effects from smelters or seafood—Bruce was the picture of perfect health. Otherwise, it was just like old times. —Jonathan B. Pont

**Bruce
Springsteen
& the E Street
Band**

04

ROSE GARDEN ARENA PORTLAND, OR APRIL 3



SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Human Touch," "Loose Ends," and "Dead Man Walkin'."

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/Rendezvous/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Dead Man Walkin'/Jungleland/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: The 100th show of the tour. Patti Scialfa is absent, with no explanation: "Patti's not here tonight, but the boys are gonna do their best for you." "Dead Man Walkin'" is a tour premiere played for Oregon's Life for a Life campaign. "Rendezvous" is an audible, in response to a sign in the audience. On the setlist but not played: "My Love Will Not Let You Down," "Prove It All Night," "She's the One" and "Backstreets."

SEARCHIN' FOR MY BABY: It was the same ominous scene from last fall. A mic stand missing. Garry's guitars waiting at Roy's left. And, finally, after all had mounted the stage—no Patti. Sources say it was simply a case of the Springsteen kids needing their mom, so Patti went home and "the boys" carried on.

"Working on the Highway" had Bruce flub his water spout shtick for the first time in memory—part of a triple-flub, really. First, Max started the beat for "She's the One," which was on the setlist (but not played, except for the few, teasing drum pounds). Then, Bruce's spray sputtered and missed the spotlight. And third, Bruce got an eyeful of the ejected fluid, was blinded in the light, and called out as he wiped his eye. Max stopped the beat and everybody else stood motionless. It was a moment which made one firmly realize how tight this band is and how rarely there is any mis-step.

Bruce got political for the tour debut of "Dead Man Walkin'." He noted and named the supporters of the "Life for Life Campaign" in Oregon, including Governor John Kitzhaber and other politicians. "Sign the petition for repeal," he urged. Then, sounds previously unheard on the tour made their way out over the audience. It was a magic moment, and no doubt "Dead Man Walkin'" is a song that could and should re-appear soon. —Bill Daverne

TACOMA DOME TACOMA, WA APRIL 4



SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Candy's Room" and "Something in the Night."

SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: Again, no Patti. On the setlist but not played: "Candy's Room" and "Spirit in the Night."

NOTHING NOBODY COULD SAY: The huge wooden Tacoma Dome became an intimate venue as the largest stateside crowd of the tour, reportedly numbering around 23,000, savored the efforts of Bruce "and the boys." Sans Patti for the second night in a row, Garry Tallent filled in without the usual strong-arm persuasion on the "meet me" chorus of "Out in the Street."

Bruce returned for the encore set with a somber look on his face. "For Tom Shannon and his friend Michael Bernard and those who died in the Alaska Airlines crash, this is for you," preceded a heartfelt "Bobby Jean."

Thirty-year-old Springsteen fan Michael Bernard was killed when Alaska Airlines Flight 261 crashed on January 31 off the coast of California. His friend Tom Shannon had contacted Springsteen about a dedication for Bernard, who was looking forward to the tour's west coast swing and would have been attending with Shannon. Bernard and eight other friends of Shannon were on the doomed flight, and he told local media Bruce's positive response to the request meant a lot to him. Shannon bought an extra ticket and had an empty seat beside him in honor of his lost friend. —Bill Daverne

KIEL CENTER ST. LOUIS, MO APRIL 8

SOUNDCHECK: Bruce takes the band through what seems to be a new original song, "Meet Me Further on up the Road." Soundcheck also includes "Candy's Room," a full-band "No Surrender," and a new arrangement of "I'm on Fire."



SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Atlantic City/Rendezvous/Darlington County/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/She's the One/Brilliant Disguise/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: A longer show, at 26 songs, features such choice rarities as "Atlantic City," "Brilliant Disguise" and "Spirit in the Night." With Patti back onstage, "Tenth Avenue" again includes "Red Headed Woman" and "Rumble Doll."

BETTER THAN ONE: Bruce improvised early when he replaced setlist songs "Candy's Room" and "The Promised Land" with "Atlantic City," "Rendezvous" and "Darlington County." Perhaps "Rendezvous" was a nod to Patti's return after a two-show absence. She looked noticeably happy to be back, and was more animated than usual. Bruce honored a banner request with a powerful "She's the One." The setlist had "She's the One" and "Brilliant Disguise" as alternates for each other, but Bruce proceeded to play an electric "Brilliant Disguise," too—much to the surprise of Nils, who was seated at his pedal steel when the song opened with Max's booming drums. It was a wonderfully played rarity, with Patti joining Bruce at the center mic for the second verse. A sound system improved for the 2000 leg is doing it justice.

—Dave Miller

KEMPER ARENA KANSAS CITY, MO APRIL 9



SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Take 'Em as They Come," "Lion's Den," "Candy's Room," and "This Hard Land."

SETLIST: Take 'Em As They Come/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/Factory/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Downbound Train/Candy's Room/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

NOTES: The Tour 2000 debuts of "Take 'Em as They Come," "Candy's Room," "Downbound Train" (by request), and "Racing in the Street."

GOOD THINGS APLENTY: On "Tenth Avenue"

LISTEN UP, STUD: "Downbound Train" was played by request: My fiancée Booka, some friends and I made a great sign, and we held it up during almost every song (except "Factory" and "The River"). Bruce sang directly to Booka during "Darlington" and "Out in the Street," and he kept looking at our sign. Then, after "Tenth Avenue," he turned towards Max (we could see the whole thing) and said, very intensely, "Downbound Train." Then he pointed at us and said, "this one's for those fellas right over there." He continued to point at us and come play to us during the rest of the show—especially during "Land of Hope and Dreams," since we were just going crazy, singing and dancing. He even came out after the show and thanked us for a great night. What a stud. —Christopher Gebring

APRIL 12

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day//Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

COUNTRY FEEDBACK: I figured Bruce would have something special in mind for Music City U.S.A., and he did. No, it wasn't a country cover or Nashville artist guest appearance. He and the band simply pummeled the country music capital with rock 'n' roll. The tone was set by the blistering performance of the first four songs, during which Bruce often bordered more on shouting than singing. The guitars were hammered fiercely throughout the night. Bruce and Nils created much more feedback in front of Max's kit than usual. Nils attacked his guitar from all angles, and even dropped to his knees during his "Youngstown" solo. Country references ranged from Dollywood in "Darlington County" to the dedication of "Mansion on the Hill"—"Here's a title I stole from a Hank Williams song, so I'd like to dedicate this to him"—to the "really big cowboy hats" in "Light of Day." —*Dave Miller*

APRIL 15

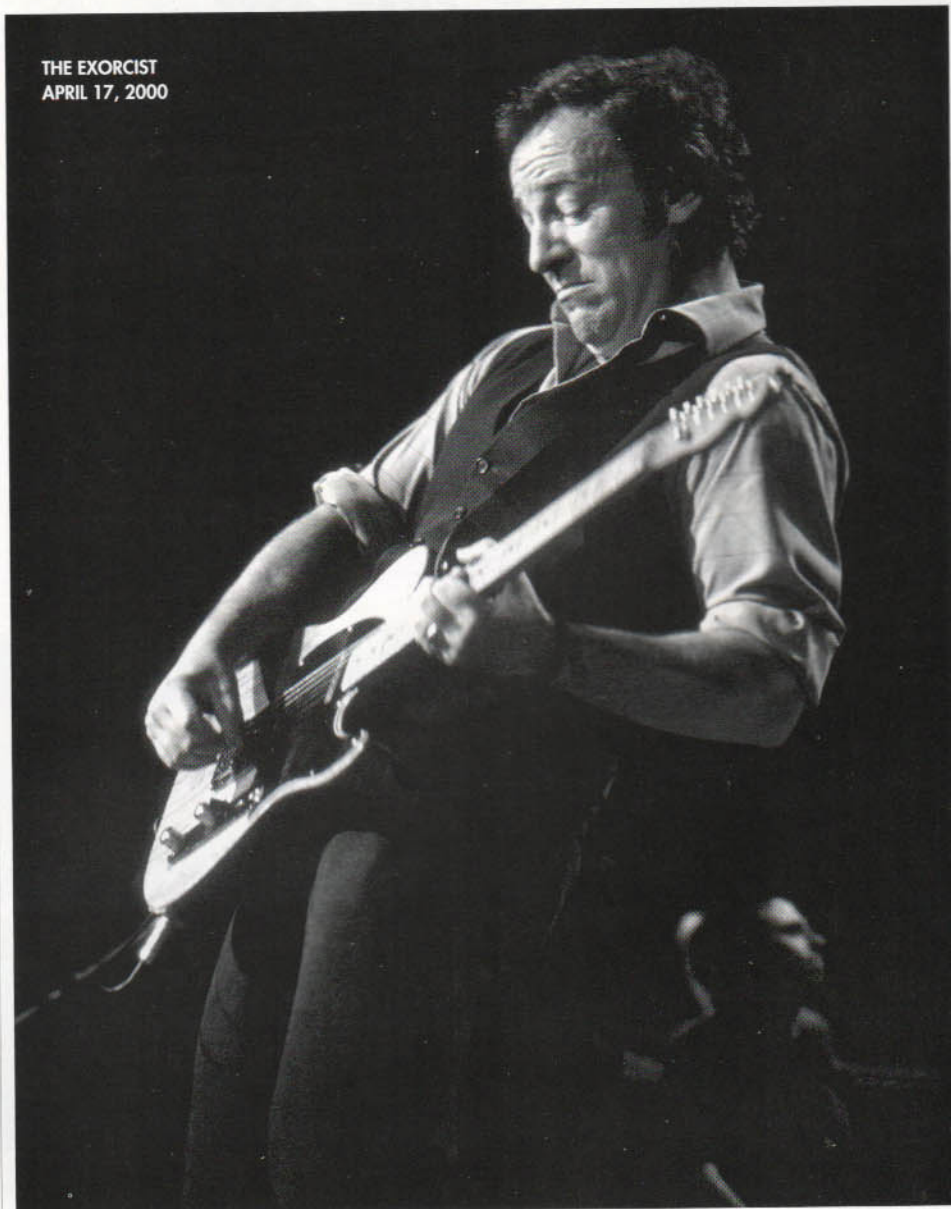
SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Atlantic City/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown /Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Back in Your Arms/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Jungleland/Light of Day//Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

IT MEANS "CLEAN YOUR ROOM": Patti was clearly missed on "Out in the Street," but it was fun when Garry sang one of the refrains. After "Tenth Avenue," Bruce, Nils and Steve had quite a long discussion, where it seemed they were deciding what to play next; "Lucky Town" was an alternate on the setlist, but in the end they played "You Can Look." After this song there was another discussion between these three; Nils turned towards Danny and Clarence, mouthing the words "Back in Your Arms." I just couldn't believe my luck. Bruce introduced the song by saying he'd had "a few requests for this one"—a huge banner by the left of stage had the song title on it. The song was absolutely magnificent: magnificent singing, magnificent sax, quite

It was a pretty spontaneous night as well, with a few other changes to the hand-written setlist; an unlisted "Spirit in the Night" opened the encores. "Spir-

it" was fabulous. I was standing center stage, with my hands outstretched by Bruce's legs as he lay on his back, singing. During the pause before the word "goodbye," this guy beside me yells out "cunnilingus!" Bruce raises his head and looks at him, incredulous, and laughs; he reaches out the mic, and the guy yells it out again. It was very funny—Bruce just shakes his head in disbelief, and laughs, and goes on to sing "goodbye, to Gypsy Angel Row...." It was a great moment. —Karl Birhstle

Don't Look Back 112 6 bars
 price is 16 Monthly
 20% 22 Single
 Dartmouth/Propped 180 Light
 Promised Land
 my Heart Beat
 River
 Young & Sons
 Murder
 Bad
 over
 100%
 You can Look
 (Look, How?)
 Back, T.
 B. B. B. B. B.
 H. R. D.
 Fall
 Land
 Rained



PAUL JAY PLUTZER PHOTO

ERWIN CENTER AUSTIN, TX

APRIL 17

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Downbound Train/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/All Just to Get to You/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: The return of a favorite "special guest." Joe Ely (who took in the show with fellow Flatlanders Butch Hancock and Jimmie Dale Gilmore) joined Bruce onstage for "All Just to Get to You," a song they sang together on Ely's *Letter to Laredo* album. "Downbound Train" also makes an appearance. "Lucky Town" was an alternate for "Downbound Train" on the setlist, and "Racing in the Street" was also on the setlist but not played.

PRESS: "BRUCE AND ELY." In the *Austin American-Statesman*: When Joe Ely joined Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band onstage at the Erwin Center Monday night for a version of Ely's "All Just to Get to You," it was a magical moment. But the rare guest slot wouldn't have happened without the help of Waterloo Records clerk (and musician) Mike Rosenthal, who found Ely's *Letter to Laredo* in the sale bin Monday after... [Terry] Magovern couldn't find it in the Joe Ely section.

Magovern needed the record, which features Springsteen's guest vocals, to teach the song to the band.

He told me "If you don't have it, Bruce won't do it," recalled Rosenthal. A relieved Magovern asked Rosenthal to recommend some other Austin acts for the Boss. At the top of the list was the latest CD from Mike Rosenthal, but Magovern also bought titles by Damon Brummett, Joe West and the Sinners, and Gurf Morlix. Plus, he laid a pair of tickets and backstage passes on Rosenthal....

COMPAQ CENTER HOUSTON, TX

APRIL 18

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Lucky Town" and numerous takes of "Better Days."

SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Atlantic City/Rendezvous/Darlington County/Factory/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Better Days/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Mary Queen of Arkansas/Backstreets/Light of Day/Cadillac Ranch/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: A completely unexpected repeat performance of "Mary Queen of Arkansas," a song which opened a Houston show way back on 3/10/74. The tour debut of "Better Days" is dedicated to Dave Marsh and Barbara and Kristin Carr. Someone throws Nils a big foam cowboy hat for "Cadillac Ranch," played once again for the Lone Star crowd ("Here's one for Texas!"). "Lucky Town" and "This Hard Land" are on the setlist but not played.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN IN HOUSTON." Ken Fountain in the *Daily Cougar*: ...While waiting for a guitar to be tuned, he entertained the crowd with a story about the band's first trip to Houston in 1975 [sic]. Having briefly sworn off airplanes because of

some previous rough flights, they took the train down from their New Jersey base. Seems the band ran into a few scrapes at the various stops along the way, making it "a very loooong train ride..."

WHEN THEY SAID "COME DOWN".... Steve leaves the stage prior to "Out in the Street" and does not play on that song. When he returns for "Tenth Avenue," Bruce says, "I told you not to eat the clams!" During "Tenth Avenue," a woman in the front row offers Bruce a bouquet. Bruce begs Patti to let him accept them and waits for Patti to give a thumbs-up. Later in the song, Patti comes over and playfully admonishes the fan. In a rarity for this tour, Bruce tells a story—he talks about taking a train to Houston in 1974 to play at Liberty Hall. He talked about the long journey and asked if anyone was there. He then dedicated "Mary Queen of Arkansas" to the "folks from the Liberty Hall days." "Better Days" received a much more fleshed-out version than on the '92-'93 tour, complete with a sax part for Clarence. —Steven Thomson

A BETTER "BETTER DAYS": "Better Days" was a pleasant surprise, and the dedication was cool. I love the *Lucky Town* album, but this version of "Better Days" shows how the E Street Band could have put that album over the top. —George Kovacik

CHARLOTTE COLISEUM CHARLOTTE, NC

APRIL 21

My Love Will Not Let You Down
Does This Bus Stop At 82nd Street
Lucky Town
Dead Man Walkin'
Meeting Across the River
Jungleland
Light of Day
Born to Run
Thunder Road
If I Should Fall Behind
Land of Hope and Dreams
Ramrod

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Does This Bus Stop At 82nd Street," "Lucky Town," and "Dead Man Walkin'."

SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Something in the Night/Rendezvous/Darlington County/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Dead Man Walkin'/Backstreets/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Stand on It/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Dead Man Walkin'/Backstreets/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Stand on It/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: "Dead Man Walkin'" reappears, in support of another local anti-death penalty effort. "Rendezvous," "Stand on It" and "Ramrod" were audibles; on the setlist but not played were "This Hard Land" and "Growin' Up."

PALE HORSE KEEPS COMIN': The crowd was amazing: loud, responsive and highly appreciative. And what a great selection of songs. The first half of the show was fantastic, full of surprises including the rare "Something in the Night." Following "Working on the Highway," several sheets of paper were laid out on the stage, both for Bruce's food bank speech and his speech about the death penalty before "Dead Man Walkin'": roughly, "They have a petition for a moratorium on executions. No matter how you feel about the death penalty, this is your opportunity to be heard. They can answer your questions... This is for People of Faith Against the Death Penalty."

—Karl Birtistle

ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS ARENA RALEIGH, NC

APRIL 22

My Love Will Not Let You Down
Does This Bus Stop At 82nd Street
Lucky Town
Dead Man Walkin'
Meeting Across the River
Jungleland
Light of Day
Born to Run
Thunder Road
If I Should Fall Behind
Land of Hope and Dreams
Ramrod

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Lucky Town," "Double Shot of My Baby's Love," and what is believed to be another new original.

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/My Hometown/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Lucky Town/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Dead Man Walkin'/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: "Lucky Town" finally makes the set again, and so does "Dead Man" dedicated to People of Faith Against the Death Penalty for the second night in a row. "Light of Day" includes "Double Shot of My Baby's Love," the 1966 classic recorded in Charlotte by the Swingin' Medallions. "Hungry Heart" includes a guest appearance from Springsteen's cousin Frankie. No Patti.

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN ENDORSES DEATH PENALTY MORATORIUM IN N.C. CONCERTS." In the *News and Observer*: Bruce Springsteen, long

FRIENDS OF MINE



BRUCE AND GUEST JOE ELY,
"ALL JUST TO GET TO YOU."
APRIL 17, 2000.

Joe Ely (4/17) • "Cousin Frankie" (4/22) • Joe Grushecky (4/25 and 4/26)

TONY COSTELLO PHOTO

known for his support of food banks, took up another cause during concerts in Charlotte and Raleigh: a moratorium on the death penalty.

Springsteen mentioned the moratorium and the group supporting it, People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, during performances in Charlotte on Friday and in Raleigh on Saturday. He then sang "Dead Man Walkin'" from the movie of the same name at both concerts.

He also allowed People of Faith to place a table in the lobby during each show and collect signatures. Volunteers collected at least 500 names, said Stephen Dear, the group's executive director.

"We recognize this is a controversial issue, and he doesn't want to be seen as preaching to his audience or telling his fans what to think," Dear said. "But he saw this as an opportunity to tell his fans they could find out more information about the death penalty from our organization."...

FOLLOW ME, BOYS! Overall, I thought this was a much stronger and more enjoyable show than Charlotte the night before. You cannot judge a show on the setlist alone, and though Charlotte may have had a few more rarities and surprises, Raleigh seemed a better show, with all the standards totally on the money. The high point of the night had to be Bruce audibly calling the "key of G" for "Double Shot of my Baby's Love" in "Light of Day" (and then calling "E" to return). "Lucky Town" finally reappeared, and it was so much better than when it was played at opening night in Barcelona. Bruce was red-hot, and Max was clearly loving playing the song. Nils' early solo seemed awkward, but Bruce's was incendiary.

—Karl Birtistle

MELLON ARENA PITTSBURGH, PA 2 NIGHTS

APRIL 25 PITTSBURGH / NIGHT 1

4/25 SOUNDCHECK: Includes a country version of "Dancing in the Dark," plus "A Good Man is Hard to Find (Pittsburgh)."

4/25 SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Human Touch/She's the One/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Backstreets/Light of Day/Idiot's Delight/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

5/25 NOTES: After many a soundcheck, "Human Touch" has its E Street Band tour premiere at last. Local hero Joe Grushecky guests on "Idiot's Delight," a song he co-wrote with Bruce from his album *Coming Home*. And Patti's back.

HERE ALONG THE SHORE: Big cheers from the crowd at the mention of Johnstown in "The River," and also for the mentions of Youngstown, and

My Love Will Not Let You Down
Prove It All Night
Two Hearts
Darkness on the Edge of Town
Promised Land
Mansion on the Hill
River
Youngstown
Murder Inc.
Badlands

Josh
Human Touch
Glad
USA
Birtistle
Cyrus
Ramrod
Thunder Road
Land of Hope and Dreams

Monongahela Valley, all of which places were not far away from tonight's venue. And speaking of big reactions, Bruce finished "Tenth Avenue" with a longer than usual tribute to the E Street Band: "the legendary, history-making, ass-shaking, bone-quaking, mother-fucking, E Street Band!"



EVERYBODY NEEDS A PLACE TO REST
APRIL 21, 2000

RENÉ VAN DIEMEN PHOTO

"Human Touch" was just superb, and Bruce's guitar work was spellbinding. (I also like Bruce's habit of pointing to and acknowledging people he knows and recognizes in the front few rows during the show—very "human touch").

"She's the One" now has a fantastic intro, and works much better than last year; Danny played wonderfully on this song, always understated but so very present.

Bruce introduced Joe Grushecky as "...a young man from Pittsburgh." He went on to say that "...we haven't rehearsed this, so, if we fuck it up..." Which they didn't, and Joe Grushecky played and sang well, making the most of his opportunity in front of such a large home crowd. —Karl Birtistle

APRIL 26 PITTSBURGH / NIGHT 2

4/26 SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Adam Raised a Cain/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/Factory/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Loose Ends/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Back in Your Arms/Jungleland/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Hungry Heart/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

4/26 NOTES: Joe Grushecky's back again for night two, this time on "Hungry Heart." Plus the

2000 debut of "Loose Ends," by request, and the welcome return of "Back in Your Arms."

GET THE JOB DONE RIGHT: Bruce didn't say "Cmon Steve" before "Two Hearts," and missed his opening beat. The band found this pretty funny. When the song was seemingly over, the band launched into the opening again, just to see if Max was paying attention. He was.

I talked briefly to Joe Grushecky before the show (he was sitting right off to the side next to Clarence) and asked if he'd be playing again that night—he said no. However, Bruce pointed over to him before "Spirit," wanting him to get backstage to get ready for "Hungry Heart." —Chad Silver

SURROUND SOUND: Tonight was just a lot of fun. In Clarence's opening invitation to the show, he called out, "People of Pittsburgh, and the surrounding area, all rise." This caused much hilarity, and Bruce later in the encores referred to Pittsburgh "and the surrounding area." Bruce dedicated "Tom Joad" to the local Pittsburgh foodbank he was supporting, adding that it was the same foodbank that he worked with in 1984, starting off his foodbank program. An incredible 11 changes from the night before; the opening section was superb, with six of the first seven songs different, and nice surprises like "Adam" and "Trapped." Bruce clearly focuses on giving somebody a varied show, whether it's the fans, the band, or the crew... whoever, it made for a very "complete" and satisfying pair of shows. —Karl Birtistle

CLOUDY OUT IN PITTSBURGH

AN UP-CLOSE (AND HANDS-ON) REPORT FROM STEEL CITY: It may not be in New Jersey, but make no mistake about it: Pittsburgh is Bruce Country. As a city it knows the struggles enumerated in "Youngstown," "Factory," and countless others; and as a community it's trying to find its own way back to hope, dreams and countless misplaced ideals. Springsteen might as well be a local hero for all the rage and understanding he expressed in Mellon Arena, and Pittsburgh might as well be his second home—the crowd certainly treated him as one of their own. In response to the crowd's energy, Bruce and the band delivered a performance that was spontaneous, joyful and intense. "Adam Raised a Cain" set a tone of desperate frustration early in the set, echoed later in "Trapped," "Point Blank," and, of course, "Youngstown" and "Murder Incorporated." After a particularly spirited "Tenth Avenue," Bruce audibly "Rendezvous," and Clarence—apparently responding to a sign in the crowd—suggested "Loose Ends," performed for the first time since the Boston stand last August. While many expected to hear "Meeting Across the River" before "Jungleland," the band opted for "Back in Your Arms." Not everyone knew it—and there were of course a few calling for "Rosalita"—but in the end it was a perfect tribute to the relationship between town and performer. All in all, a first-rate show. And his thighs are totally rock hard. —Stacie Tobin

JUST ONE KISS

Lion's Den (2/28)
Where the Bands Are (3/4)
Tougher Than the Rest (3/10)
Follow That Dream (3/18)
Take 'Em As They Come (4/9)
Candy's Room (4/9)
All Just to Get to You (4/17)
Better Days (4/18)
Something in the Night (4/21)
Lucky Town (4/22)
Idiot's Delight (4/25)
Loose Ends (4/26)
Dancing in the Dark (4/30)
Incident on 57th Street (5/4)
Growin' Up (5/7)
Roulette (5/8)

TWO FOR THE ROAD

You Can Look (3/6 and 4/15)
Cadillac Ranch (3/13 and 4/18)
Mary Queen of Arkansas (3/14 and 4/18)
Adam Raised a Cain (3/19 and 4/26)
Downbound Train (4/9 and 4/17)
Racing in the Street (4/9 and 5/8)
Back in Your Arms (4/15 and 4/26)
Stand on It (4/21 and 4/30)
Human Touch (4/25 and 5/7)
No Surrender (5/4 and 5/7)

FIRSTAR CENTER CINCINNATI, OH

APRIL 30



SOUNDHECK: Includes several takes of "Car Wash" and the new arrangement of "Dancing in the Dark."

SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/The Promised Land/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/Rendezvous/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/Dancing in the Dark/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Stand on It/Bobby Jean/ Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/ Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

NOTES: The tour debut of "Dancing in the Dark," in the new country arrangement with Nils on pedal steel and Garry on stand-up bass. A special re-worked performance of "Born in the U.S.A." for the anniversary of the fall of Saigon reintroduces the "long gone daddy" and makes for five songs performed from the *Born in the U.S.A.* album. "Human Touch" is on the setlist but not played.

THE BIG TOP: An extended jam at the end of "Darlington County," an unplanned "Rendezvous" and the crazy-eight, follow-the-leader zaniness of "Out in the Street" only hinted at what would come next. During "Tenth Avenue," a fan in front of the left side of the stage threw her bra perfectly on top of Bruce's head. After Bruce sheepishly examined the white bra, he stuffed it inside Clarence's coat pocket. The Big Man, without missing a beat, changed his line to "You got the picture" with a shining grin.

Bruce did his best to explain the situation to Patti, proclaiming, "I'm innocent, I'm totally innocent!" as he re-enacted how the bra landed on his head. Then it was Patti's turn. As she readied to mimic her husband's pelvic thrust, a fan threw his shirt at Patti. Bruce playfully called out, "Security!"—the rest of the the song was performed with gusto.

Another total surprise—the tour premiere of "Dancing in the Dark." Bruce played the first verse alone before the band joined him for an acoustic version. It was played in a light shuffle, with Bruce smiling and delivering relaxed, upbeat vocals. After the song ended, he waved his fist in a circle above his head in a celebratory manner.

The bra toss and "Dancing" surprise will be long remembered, but the musical highlight of the night—and one of the tour highlights—was perhaps the definitive acoustic version of "Born in the U.S.A.," which coincided with the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Bruce reworked his vocals into a stretched country howl, and concluded by singing, "Ten years... 15 years... 25 years burnin' down the road." A chilling and awe-inspiring performance. The rollicking rarity "Stand on It" kicked off the encores in one of the best shows I've seen on the tour. —Dave Miller

AIR CANADA CENTRE TORONTO, ON 2 NIGHTS

MAY 3
TORONTO / NIGHT 1

5/3 SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/



FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
MARCH 10, 2000

RENÉ VAN DIEMEN PHOTO



Darlington County/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

5/3 NOTES: The first Canadian show of the tour, where "Light of Day" sees people "lost in hatred of the Jersey Devils."

SILENT AND STILL: The first night in Toronto was the standard A-setlist, with only two flaws in an otherwise great show. First was the generic setlist (no further explanation required there), second was the audience. Despite a great performance, it almost felt being at a funeral. Most of the crowd sat through the majority of the show, and there seemed to be little response when Bruce tried to get the audience involved during "Badlands," "Tenth Avenue" and "Out in the Street." When Bruce pointed the mic towards the audience during the opening of "Thunder Road," you could almost hear a pin drop. —Colin Dale

MAY 4 TORONTO / NIGHT 2



5/4 SOUNDCHECK: "Incident on 57th Street" and "Further on Up the Road" are both played several times, plus the acoustic "No Surrender."

5/4 SETLIST: Don't Look Back/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Rendezvous/The Promised Land/Factory/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Streets/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Incident on 57th Street/No Surrender/Jungleland/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

5/4 NOTES: "Incident" is played for the first time since Los Angeles (10/23/99), plus a full-band acoustic "No Surrender."

BEAUTY, EH?: I knew it was going to be something special when I heard "Don't Look Back" open the concert, and then to hear "Incident"—I just couldn't believe it. The crowd was into this concert much more than the previous night's audience. There was more standing, dancing, and singing—although it was a bit embarrassing when it seemed everyone in the building forgot the lines to "No Surrender" when Bruce invited us to join in.

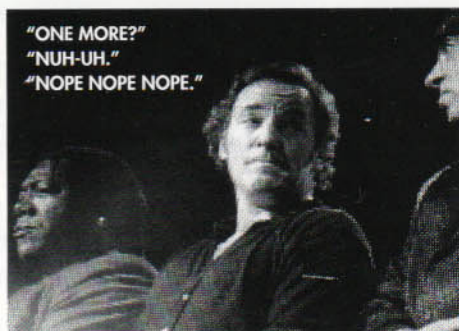
Some guy jumped on stage during "Born to Run" and had his arm around Bruce before his security guard escorted him away. After the song, Bruce was visibly annoyed and was quite animated as the band huddled by the tunnel to change instruments. He then went over to the side of the stage, leaned down and gave his security guy a blast. Steve wasn't pleased either and just shook his head.

Bruce's mood changed back to joy with the rest of the encores, and he finished up Ramrod by pouring a couple of cups of water on his pantlegs and then sliding between Clarence's legs at the front of the stage. —David Lecour

CIVIC CENTER HARTFORD, CT 2 NIGHTS

MAY 7 HARTFORD / NIGHT 1

5/7 SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Take 'Em as They Come" and "Sherry Darling."



5/7 SETLIST: Don't Look Back/The Ties that Bind/Two Hearts/Rendezvous/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Human Touch/No Surrender/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Growin' Up/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

5/7 NOTES: "Don't Look Back" opens for the second night in a row, and "No Surrender" is played again in the full-band country version. The latter is dedicated to the memory of Lenny Zakim, who died last year of cancer. Other rarities: "Human Touch" and "Growin' Up." For Patti's intro, "My Girl," no "Rumble Doll." In the crowd: ESPN's Chris Berman, University of Connecticut women's basketball coach Geno Auriemma (fresh off a national championship), and Vincent Pastore (Big Pussy on *The Sopranos*).

WE'D ALWAYS REMEMBER: I figured this was going to be a "Model A" show, since it was the first night of a two-night stand. Boy, was I wrong! From the first opener, it was clear this was going to be a special night. My suspicions were proved correct when the band rolled into "Rendezvous" and flat-out nailed "Human Touch." Bruce dedicated a full-band acoustic version of "No Surrender" to the late Lenny Zakim, a Hartford native, and JDL and civil rights advocate, seeing Danny on the accordion, Nils on pedal steel, Gary on an upright bass, and Max using the brushes was a special treat, and a definite stand-out of the evening. Bruce's new solo "U.S.A. Blues" was fantastic! His virtuosity on the slide guitar is incredible. More surprises were still to come: when the band came back out onstage for the second encores, I was figuring on "Thunder Road." Well, we got it, but not until after a fantastic version of "Growin' Up!" I'd say 80% of the crowd was singing along with the chorus. —Bill Curtis

MAY 8 HARTFORD / NIGHT 2

5/8 SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Leavin' Train," "Leap of Faith," "Lion's Den," and "Roulette."

5/8 SETLIST: Roulette/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darlington County (w/ Honky Tonk Women)/Atlantic City/My Hometown/Independence Day/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Brilliant Disguise/ Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Spirit in the Night/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

5/8 NOTES: The tour premiere of "Roulette" (played for the first time since 7/14/88), plus a slew of other rarities, in a show widely considered the best of 2000 so far. Eleven songs not played the night before, for a total of 35 different songs played in Hartford. "Honky Tonk Women" is worked into "Darlington County," and "Light of Day" includes "Boom Boom." In the crowd: Ed Sciaky.

PRESS: Steve Morse in the *Boston Globe*. The locomotive known as Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band is winding down its 130-date world tour. It heads to Anaheim, then to Las Vegas and Salt Lake City, then to ten nights—count 'em—at New York's Madison Square Garden next month. That marks the official end, though, incredibly, the tour is still gathering steam judging from Sunday's sold-out stop... even more exciting than during their five-night sprint at Boston's FleetCenter last August.

The difference lies in how well the rest of the band has caught up to Springsteen's energy. He's still in a class by himself, but saxophonist Clarence Clemons, especially, has stepped up from the out-of-shape, sweat-soaked Clemons of last summer. He hired a personal trainer on the road, and the results were apparent on Sunday, as he danced with Springsteen on several occasions—even doing some swing-dance twirls—and blew sax as if his life depended on it. The ease with which he interacted with Springsteen echoed the E Street's '80s glory days when "the Boss" and the "Big Man" were inseparable... Springsteen fans can only hope and dream of seeing this well-oiled band again. It was the comeback act of 1999—and it's only getting better.

ONE FOR ALL TIME: Where to start? "Roulette" is played for the first time in ages. Bruce scrambles a few lyrics at the end, laughs it off, and the band launches into a thrilling version of "Prove It." Max left his seat at one point, he was drumming so hard. It was a sign of things to come as the band unleashed a three-hour show that ranks with the best they've ever done. They started the music for "Darlington County" and somehow transitioned into "Honky Tonk Women." The crowd lost its collective mind. It only got better with a soulful "Independence Day" and a searing "Racing in the Street." At the end, a 12-minute version of "Ramrod" closed the show. It was like Bruce didn't want to get off the stage. There are Bruce shows, and then there are Bruce events. This was one for the books. —Peter Abraham

Tour coverage will conclude in the next issue with the remaining 2000 U.S. dates. As always, the help we receive from readers is essential. From photos to ticket stubs, setlists, press clippings and comments from the shows, all contributions are greatly appreciated. E-mail comments and setlists to editor@backstreets.com, or send by fax (202-232-2259) or mail. Our reports wouldn't be possible without all the help Backstreets receives from its readers. Special thanks this time to: Peter Abraham, Les Appel, Doug Baker, Ken Baum, Gene Bearer, Fred Beiderbecke, Dave Bernstein, Karl Birtheistle, Susan Blair, Dave Bliss, Lori Capron, Bo Champion, Peter Church, Jerry Ciccone, Jason Constantine, Bill Coultas, Rick Courtney, Bill Daily, Bill Daverne, Darrel Davis, Tom DeLuca, Joseph Dimichele, Barclay Ericson, Bill Fajen, Rich Feinberg, Robert Ferraro, Eric Field, Maggie Flynn, Tom Friedrich, Tom Gaffigan, Cove Geary, Mike Giordano, Rob Grace, Randy Griffey, Christopher Gehring, Stephen Greenslade, Joe Harker, Brian Helgesen, Eric Hodges, Nancy Humphries, Lisa Ianucci, Marsha Kendall, Les Kilday, George G. Kovack, Joe Kunekia, Tony Kuzminski, Brien Lewis, Joelle Liller, Ken Lund, David McFadden, Bob Mientus, Anne Miller, Dave Miller, Dan Murphy, Paul Murphy, Scott Neal, Jeffrey Nelson, Ged Norris, Bob Orchant, Joe Quirk, Jim Rice, Donna Schake, Stan Schwartz, Tom Shahnazarian, David Shaw, Chad Silver, Brian Stanley, Steven Thomson, Patti Tilson, Dominic Toto, Dave Treherne, James Turano, Tom Van Arsdell, René Van Diemen, Dan Weiss, Tom White, John Zellers, and everyone else who sent stuff our way. Keep 'em coming!

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND

	F	MARCH										APRIL									
	State College 28 PA	Orlando 4 FL	Tampa 6 FL	Ft. Lauderdale 9 FL	Ft. Lauderdale 10 FL	Dallas 13 TX	N. Little Rock 14 AR	Memphis 18 TN	New Orleans 19 LA	Denver 30 CO	Denver 31 CO	Portland 3 OR	Tacoma 4 WA	St. Louis 8 MO	Kansas City 9 MO	Nashville 12 TN	Louisville 15 KY	Austin 17 TX	Houston 18 TX	Charlotte 21 NC	Raleigh 22 NC
LION'S DEN	1																				
MY LOVE WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN		1					1	1		1			1						1	1	
DON'T LOOK BACK				1													1				
TAKE 'EM AS THEY COME															1						
THE TIES THAT BIND	2		1		1	1			1		1	1		1		1		1			1
ROULETTE																					
PROVE IT ALL NIGHT	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2			2	2			2	2		2	
ADAM RAISED A CAIN									2												
TWO HEARTS	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN	5		4	4		4			4	4		4	4		4	4		4			4
TRAPPED		4			4			4													
ATLANTIC CITY							4							4			4		4		
THE PROMISED LAND	6		5	5		5		5	5	5	2	2	5		2	2	5	5	2		2
SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT																				4	
RENDEZVOUS										4	6			5					5	5	
DARLINGTON COUNTY		5			5		5		6		5	5		6	5	5			6	6	5
MANSION ON THE HILL	7	6	6	6		6		6	6	6				7		6		6			
FACTORY							6		7		6				6				7		
MY HOMETOWN					6						7	7	6				6			7	6
THE RIVER	8	7		7		7	7	7	8	7		8	7	8	7	7	7	7	8	8	
INDEPENDENCE DAY																					
POINT BLANK			7		7																7
YOUNGSTOWN	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	8	9	8	9	8	8	8	8	9	9	8
MURDER INCORPORATED	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	10	9	9	10	9	10	9	9	9	9	10	10	9
BADLANDS	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	10	10	11	10	11	10	10	10	10	11	11	10
OUT IN THE STREET	12	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	11	11	12	11	12	11	11	11	11	12	12	11
TENTH AVENUE FREEZE-OUT	13	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	13	12	12	13	12	13	12	12	12	12	13	13	12
WHERE THE BANDS ARE		13																			
TOUGHER THAN THE REST					13																
WORKING ON THE HIGHWAY	14				14	13	13	13		13		14				13				14	
YOU CAN LOOK			13														13				
FOLLOW THAT DREAM								14													
BRILLIANT DISGUISE				13										15							
DOWNBOUND TRAIN															13			13			
HUMAN TOUCH																					
BETTER DAYS																			14		
LUCKY TOWN																					13
BECAUSE THE NIGHT			14						14		13		13								
SHE'S THE ONE		14		14										14							
CANDY'S ROOM															14						
LOOSE ENDS																					
DANCING IN THE DARK																					
BACK IN YOUR ARMS																	14				
MARY QUEEN OF ARKANSAS							14												16		
THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD	15	15	15	15	15	14	15		15	14	14	15	14	16	15	14	15	14	15	15	14
DEAD MAN WALKIN'												16								16	15
INCIDENT ON 57TH STREET																					
NO SURRENDER																					
BORN IN THE U.S.A.	16	16	16	16					16	15			15	17		15		15			
MEETING ACROSS THE RIVER					16	15		15			15							16			16
JUNGLELAND			17		17	16		16			16	17	16				16	17			17
BACKSTREETS	17	17		17			16		17	16				18		16			17	17	
RACING IN THE STREET															16						
LIGHT OF DAY	18	18	18	18	18	17	17	17	18	17	17	18	17	19	17	17	17	18	18	18	18
CADILLAC RANCH						25													19		
SPIRIT IN THE NIGHT									19					20			18			19	
ALL JUST TO GET TO YOU																		19			
IDIOT'S DELIGHT																					
HUNGRY HEART				19		20		18													19
BOBBY JEAN	20	20	20		19	19	19	19	20	19	18	19	18	21	19	18	19	20		20	20
BORN TO RUN	21	21	21	21	20	21	20	20	21	20	19	20	19	22	20	19	20	21	20	21	21
STAND ON IT																				22	
GROWIN' UP																					
THUNDER ROAD	22	22	22	22	21	22	21	21	22	21	20	21	20	23	21	20	21	22	21	23	22
IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND	23	23	23	23	22	23	22	22	23	22	21	22	21	24	22	21	22	23	22	24	23
LAND OF HOPE AND DREAMS	24	24	24	24	23	24	23	23	24	23	22	23	22	25	23	22	23	24	23	25	24
RAMROD	19	19	19	20	24	18	18	24	25	18	23	24	23	26	18	23	24	25	24	26	25

U.S.A.
2000

Pittsburgh 25 PA	Pittsburgh 26 PA	Cincinnati 30 OH	Toronto 3 ON	Toronto 4 ON	Hartford 7 CT	Hartford 8 CT	
1				1	1		LION'S DEN
							MY LOVE
							DON'T LOOK BACK
	1	1	1		2		TAKE 'EM AS THEY COME
						1	THE TIES THAT BIND
2			2	2		2	ROULETTE
	2						PROVE IT ALL NIGHT
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	ADAM RAISED A CAIN
4		4	4				TWO HEARTS
	4						DARKNESS
						5	TRAPPED
5		2		5	5		ATLANTIC CITY
							THE PROMISED LAND
		6		4	4		SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT
	5	5	5			4	RENDEZVOUS
6		7	6		6		DARLINGTON COUNTY
	6			6			MANSION ON THE HILL
						6	FACTORY
7		8	7				MY HOMETOWN
						7	THE RIVER
	7			7	7		INDEPENDENCE DAY
8	8	9	8	8	8	8	POINT BLANK
9	9	10	9	9	9	9	YOUNGSTOWN
10	10	11	10	10	10	10	MURDER INCORPORATED
11	11	12	11	11	11	11	BADLANDS
12	12	13	12	12	12	12	OUT IN THE STREET
							TENTH AVENUE FREEZE-OUT
							WHERE THE BANDS ARE
		14	13				TOUGHER THAN THE REST
							WORKING ON THE HIGHWAY
							YOU CAN LOOK
						13	FOLLOW THAT DREAM
							BRIGHT DISGUISE
13					13		DOWNBOUND TRAIN
							HUMAN TOUCH
							BETTER DAYS
							LUCKY TOWN
						14	BECAUSE THE NIGHT
14							SHE'S THE ONE
	13						CANDY'S ROOM
		15					LOOSE ENDS
	15						DANCING IN THE DARK
							BACK IN YOUR ARMS
15	14	16	14			15	MARY QUEEN OF ARKANSAS
							THE GHOST OF TOM Joad
							DEAD MAN WALKIN'
				13			INCIDENT ON 57TH STREET
				14	14		NO SURRENDER
		17	15		15		BORN IN THE U.S.A.
							MEETING ACROSS THE RIVER
	16			15			JUNGLELAND
16		18	16		16		BACKSTREETS
						16	RACING IN THE STREET
17	17	19	17	16	17	17	LIGHT OF DAY
							CADILLAC RANCH
	18					18	SPIRIT IN THE NIGHT
							ALL JUST TO GET TO YOU
18							IDIOT'S DELIGHT
	19			17			HUNGRY HEART
20		21	18		19		BOBBY JEAN
21	20	22	19	18	20	19	BORN TO RUN
		20					STAND ON IT
					21		GROWIN' UP
22	21	23	20	19	22	20	THUNDER ROAD
23	22	24	21	20	23	21	IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND
24	23	25	22	21	24	22	LAND OF HOPE AND DREAMS
25	24	26	23	22	18	23	RAMROD



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& the e street band**

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June 15	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 17	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 20	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 22	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 23	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 26	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 27	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
June 29	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
July 1	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden

The E Street Band 1999-2000 tour is slated to end with the ten-night Madison Square Garden stand. In case of any additions to the tour schedule, visit the Backstreets website at www.backstreets.com to find continuously updated tour news and more.

ON COLLECT ING

By Richard Breton

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.



•**Copenhagen Rain**
(Piggham, 3CD-R)
Sound: 9
Performance: 9
Packaging: 7

Copenhagen Night captures one of the final European shows in 1999, in Denmark on June 26, in front of most likely the largest audience of the tour, and it's one of the better releases from this leg. The title alludes to the inclement weather that night. It was a steady rain, with the occasional downpour that drenched the 40,000-plus fans in attendance. Under such less-than-optimum conditions, for a taper to come away with a complete recording of the show at all is tremendous. For it to sound this

good is practically a miracle.

The fact that it was raining was certainly not lost on Bruce and the band, as there were several references to the weather made that night. None were bigger than opening the show with a fine cover version of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Who'll Stop the Rain," which to date is the only performance of this song on this tour. And during "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," Bruce says: "I'm feeling a little unusual tonight, must be all this rain," eventually adding, "Raindrops keep falling on my head, and I'm gonna chase those clouds away... but maybe not today."

Bruce also does a bit of "Fire" during "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" in response to a request and as part of Garry Tallent's introduction, and the rest of the band has fun with their own intros as well. Other notable setlist inclusions are a fine "Tougher Than the Rest," "Where the Bands Are," "Because the Night," "Streets of Philadelphia" and "Stand on It."

There are some spots where the rain may have gotten the best of the taper, as the sound becomes a bit muffled, but these are very short. Otherwise, it's a fine recording.

The packaging is better than most, especially for a CD-R label. Not your typical laser-printer quality production printed on plain paper. All in all, this is one of the better releases from Piggham, and it surpasses some of the releases from this tour issued on factory-pressed CDs.

•**The Other Night**
(Doberman, 3CD-R)
Sound: 8
Performance: 9
Packaging: 7

At the end of 1980, Bruce played a legendary stand at Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, NY, culminating with the final show on New Year's Eve—the longest show Bruce and the E Street Band have played to date, at over four hours. "Merry Christmas Baby" was only played at these three shows, and one version was eventually released. Excellent soundboards for all three shows fell into collectors' hands, and the final two shows have been bootlegged repeatedly in the past, particularly the New Year's Eve show. Previously, Crystal Cat has

released both the definitive version of the 12/29 show, *Coliseum Night*, as well as a great but slightly imperfect version of the 12/31 show, *Nassau Night*. But nothing has appeared on CD from the first show until now.

While the other two shows began with "Night," this one opened with "Merry Christmas Baby" (the released version of which was taken from the next night). There are some mistakes made here and there—Clarence's missed note at the beginning of "Merry Christmas Baby," a flubbed harmonica note in the middle of "The River," some feedback—which drop the performance rating of this concert down a notch from the other two, but just barely.

The mix leaves a little to be desired. As with most of the circulating tapes of these shows, the vocals take a back seat to the instruments, especially on the louder songs. At times it seems that Bruce's vocals are affected the most, as there are certain points where the background vocals are at a higher level than his. Most of the time, especially on the slower songs or those without the band's wall of sound, this isn't a problem. And a spotlight on the instruments has its advantages: check out the organ on the opener, or the guitar in "Independence Day."

The source tape isn't perfect, and there are a few short rough areas hit along the way: some distortion on the louder guitar-driven songs, and dropouts, for example, on "Out in the Street" or "Stolen Car"—the latter using a different source tape towards the end. There is some hiss as well, but only noticeable in the quietest sections.

As much as Crystal Cat, E. St., or even Dandelion should work their mastering magic on this show, that's probably not going to happen. Neither is a full official release of this show, it's a safe bet (even though professional recordings exist that allowed three songs from 12/28 to appear on the *Live 1975/85* box set). So what we do have is a faithful transfer of a mostly-excellent soundboard tape of a show that deserved release, and to their credit, Doberman did a great job. Anyone who is a fan of *The River* tour, and especially this stand, will be happy with this set.

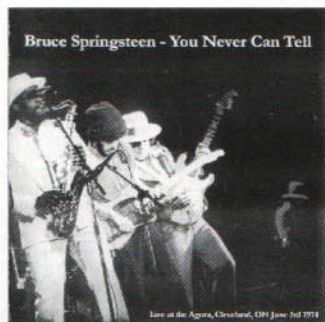


•**And the E Street Band Played**
(Scorpio)
Sound: 10
Performance: 10
Packaging: 7

•**You Never Can Tell**
(Piggham, CD-R)
Sound: 10
Performance: 10
Packaging: 7

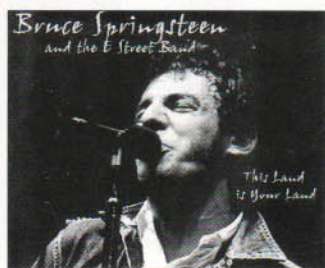
Both of these titles are from the well-known concert at the Agora in Cleveland on June 3, 1974 that included Ernest "Boom" Carter on drums, both represent a major sound upgrade over all previous CDs of this show. There were major problems with the best CD version previously released of this show, *And the Band Played* on the Swingin' Pig label. Not only was it incomplete, the extreme overuse of the NoNoise system created a dull sound—even compared to some prior vinyl releases. You may now throw away your copy of *And the Band Played*.

And the E Street Band Played and *You Never Can Tell* contain just the broadcast portion of the show, so while neither contain the entire concert, they are more complete than previous releases in that they include Bruce's cover of Chuck Berry's "You Never Can Tell." In addition, the Scorpio version includes three bonus tracks taken from the excellent audience tape of the Boston show on October 29, 1974 (and previously released on Doberman's fine *Flesh and Fantasy*).



Originally broadcast by WMMS-FM in Cleveland, these discs are reportedly taken from the radio station broadcast master reel. There's no reason to doubt this—the stereo separation and dynamic range are impressive—although the overall mix still leaves a lot to be desired.

Both sets seem to use the same source tape, but since Piggham Records' *You Never Can Tell* was released months prior to Scorpio's set, there has been speculation that Scorpio used Piggham's release as its source. Regardless, what matters is that there are now two greatly improved releases available for this show. Either is recommended.



•**This Land is Your Land**

(Piggham, 3CD-R)

Sound: 5

Performance: 9

Packaging: 7

After the triumphant European leg of the *River* tour, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band came back for the final leg of the U.S. tour in the summer of 1981. This began with an unprecedented six-show stand at the brand new Brendan Byrne Arena at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, NJ. Some tracks from these shows have appeared before as bonus tracks or as part of compilations, but there hasn't been a release of a complete show from this stand until now.

This Land is Your Land is taken from the second night, July 3. It's a great show, with "Summertime Blues" leading into "Two Hearts" in the middle of the first set. Bruce is later joined by Gary "U.S." Bonds for rousing versions of "Jol   Blon" and "This Little Girl," and the encores include Bruce and Steve trading verses on "I Don't Want to Go Home."

Unfortunately, while the show is a great one, the tape used here is at least a few generations away from the master. In addition to some hiss, there's the annoying sound of tape-head misalignment (muffling the high-end frequen-

cies every few seconds) marring most of this set. It's not unlistenable, but it depends on how you listen. This one would probably make for decent driving music for your car; to keep your sanity, definitely avoid headphones.

To be fair, the Brendan Byrne Arena was not an easy place to capture great sound on tape, and none of the tapes of this show sound particularly good. But in the end, this is a disappointing release of a great show.

•**Stockholm in Our Hearts**

(Piggham, 3CD-R)

Sound: 8

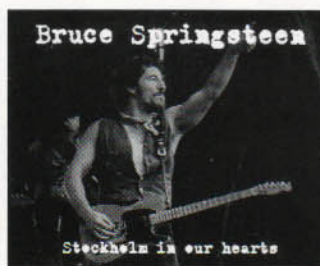
Performance: 7

Packaging: 7

This is a first since I began writing reviews for *Backstreets* in the mid-1990s: a review of a complete show from the 1992-93 tour. There are two good reasons for this: one, all the best releases from this tour had been released and reviewed prior to 1994; and two, this was certainly not my favorite tour. So it's not that some discs from these shows haven't been issued over the past six years, it's that none cried out to be reviewed. With older shows being reissued and the solo acoustic tour following shortly after, the number of new releases from the 1992-93 tour quickly stopped. One has to wonder why any label would release a *Human Touch/Lucky Town* show in the middle of the current tour, but this one at least provides food for thought.

The band Bruce put together for this tour was at its best when it was tackling the songs from the two non-E Street albums that had just been released. Even some of Bruce's older, slower-tempo songs like "Atlantic City," "My Hometown," "Brilliant Disguise" and "The River" come across fine. The main problem I have with this particular group of players was that, to be blunt, they failed miserably at Bruce's up-tempo older songs. To my ears, "Badlands," "Light of Day" and especially "Born to Run" are just plain painful to listen to. They were painful in the early '90s, and they are even more so now in comparison to performances on the 1999-2000 tour with the E Street Band.

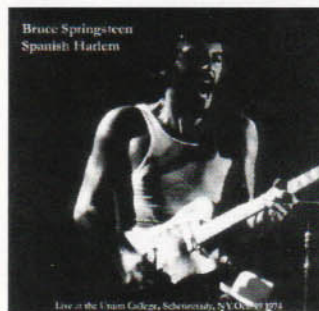
I've often wondered if I would feel the same way in reverse—that is, if *Human Touch* and *Lucky*



Town songs performed with the E Street Band would suffer in comparison to the '92-93 players. Not too many of these songs have appeared on the current tour to date, which is unfortunate because there are some songs too good to be ignored. You'll find most of these songs on this set, as well as some well-chosen covers like "It's Alright" and especially "Many Rivers To Cross" that, honestly, just wouldn't sound that same with the E Street Band.

Soundwise, this comes from one of the better overall tapes of this tour. But it's not perfect: there are a couple of drop-outs, during "Many Rivers to Cross" and "Rockin' All Over the World." On occasion the sound crackles or seems muffled, but this seems to vary depending on the player—an unfortunate aspect of some CD-Rs, and something to bear in mind.

It comes down to this: If you're a fan of the '92-93 tour, this is one to seek out. For others who are less enthusiastic about this tour, or who already have *Sheffield Night* or *Meadowlands Night*, this one isn't going to make much difference.



•**Spanish Harlem**

(Piggham, 2CD-R)

Sound: 6

Performance: 10

Packaging: 7

A while back, Doberman released a 2CD-R set taken from the Boston Music Hall on October 29, 1974, called *Flesh and Fantasy*—a fine document of the rather neglected Fall 1974 tour.

Spanish Harlem on Piggham Records, taken from the October 19 show in Schenectady, NY, is in many ways just as important.

This short tour found the E Street Band with newly introduced members: Roy Bittan on keyboards replacing David Sancious, and Max Weinberg on drums replacing "Boom" Carter. But what really set these shows apart was the addition of Suki Lahav on violin. Her contributions to such songs as "Incident on 57th Street," "New York City Serenade" and the early version of "Jungleland" gave the songs a delicacy that hasn't quite been evident since.

There's more to be enjoyed here than excellent versions of these songs. "She's the One" is still a work-in-progress and includes lyrics that would later appear in other songs (mainly "Backstreets"). This reading of "Lost in the Flood" may be the definitive live version. The beautiful cover of "Spanish Harlem" with Suki's violin lending added grace to the performance is unforgettable. And for a song that hadn't been played live much previously (and wouldn't be released for another ten months), the audience reaction to the introduction of "Jungleland" is incredibly enthusiastic.

The sound is quite satisfactory given the vintage of the recording. I'd place it as being nearly as good as *Flesh and Fantasy*. The sound is uneven in spots, and there's also a bit of distortion in the louder passages; there are a few minor edits between certain songs where it's obvious the cassette is being turned over or a new tape inserted. The tape hiss has been digitally reduced, with a little reduction in the high-end as an unfortunate by-product that can be quickly rectified by boosting the treble a bit.

There are better-sounding releases of Fall 1974 and Spring 1975 shows with Suki Lahav in the band, but I can count them on one hand and still have fingers left over. By the middle of 1975, Lahav had left the band. All we have left are the tapes of these shows, which are slowly but surely finding their way onto disc. The setlists for these shows seem rather static on paper, but the passion of the performances is the thing—and this one has passion to spare. 🐾

Righteous Babe's righteous release

Woody Guthrie Tribute on CD at Last

By John J. Kelly

It's going on five years since Bruce Springsteen decided to go out on an international solo tour and asked us kindly for quiet (also giving us permission to tell noisy neighbors to "shut the fuck up") so we could hear the sounds and silences of the songs he had crafted. Since the beginning of his career, he has been writing songs in the tradition of Woody Guthrie. It was on the solo acoustic tour for *The Ghost of Tom Joad* that Bruce began to perform in the tradition of Woody. And on a magical Sunday night in September of 1996, in the midst of that tour, Springsteen and a wide variety of performers gathered to remember, honor, and celebrate the songs of Woody Guthrie.

The concert was the climax of a ten-day educational conference on the life and times of Guthrie. And now, after more than four years of wrangling with record labels and lawyers, Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe Records has released a CD that features the best of what was performed that night, along with snippets of spoken words by and about Guthrie from the conference.

The Sunday night concert was a collaboration between the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Woody Guthrie Archives. Nora Guthrie, the curator of her father's archives in New York, told *Backstreets* she was crying tears of joy all evening, beginning at the outset when Ani DiFranco opened the show with a breathtaking, heart-wrenching version of "Do Re Mi."

"The one moment that I really remember was at the very get-go when Ani DiFranco opened up the program," Guthrie said. "A lot of people didn't know at the time who she was. There was this moment when Ani started singing 'Do Re Mi,' and after about five seconds I knew she was just brilliant. And there was this hush in the audience, like everybody's jaws just dropped.

And that's when I started to cry."

What is hard to believe is that these performances by the likes of Springsteen, DiFranco, Billy Bragg, Indigo Girls, and others almost didn't make it to CD. Guthrie told *Backstreets*, "I had been trying to get a couple of record labels to record the concert, because I had a feeling it was going to be something really special. And everyone was rejecting me, telling me I didn't have a show." According to Guthrie, the assistance of Springsteen and his entire sound and lighting crew, as well as the persistence, tenacity and funding of Ani DiFranco and her manager Scott Fisher, made it possible.

"We were taping the show, thanks to Bruce," Guthrie explained, "who had given us all of his sound equipment and technicians to use. He brought his whole crew, and they did the lighting, the sound—they did everything. It would have cost us a lot of money. I can't tell you how much money he saved us. He basically produced the show. And a lightbulb went off, and I realized that this was going to be such an incredible night, and we owned the tapes. As soon as the concert was over I ran to Ani and from that moment, we knew this was going to be a CD." DiFranco produced the album, with proceeds going to benefit the Archives.

When Springsteen took to the microphone for his own set that evening, he sang six songs: Woody Guthrie's "Tom Joad," "Blowin' Down the Road" (with Joe Ely), "Oklahoma Hills" with Ely and Arlo Guthrie, "Riding in my Car," "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)" and "Across the Border."

Of those six songs, Ani DiFranco, who was given the dif-

ficult task of selecting which songs by each artist to include, selected "Ridin'" and "Deportee."

While it would have been a real treat to have Springsteen's live "Across the Border" officially released on CD, DiFranco decided early on to only include Woody Guthrie songs. The two songs she chose are completely different in style and content, and both show Springsteen's and Guthrie's ability to be funny and boisterous as well as solemn.

"Ridin' in My Car" is Bruce at his silliest and most rambunctious. Before beginning, Springsteen talked of discovering Woody's songs about automobiles. "No disrespect, Mr. Guthrie," Springsteen said in mock seriousness, "but that's my business." And off into the song he rolls, adding his own unique and hilarious percussion, Bruce almost cracks himself up halfway through the tune. Before "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)," a song he had only performed live twice before, Bruce spoke of this country's hypocrisy regarding the use and mistreatment of immigrant workers. The tone was stark and the audience silent as he sang:

"A sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos canyon/a giant ball of fire it shook all our hills/who are these dear friends who have fallen like dry leaves/the radio says they are just deportees."

Springsteen also chimes in on two tracks with the All Severance Hall cast, on the album-opening "Hard Travelin' Hoote-nanny," and the closing title track, "Til We Outnumber 'Em (This Land is Your Land)."

For Nora Guthrie, Springsteen's performance that night was "killer," though that wasn't his only contribution: "It was funny, because everybody had

this feeling that [Springsteen] is shy and sticks to himself, and he was just out there chatting with everyone. He just fit right in. He did so much to make the night. And even his crew: they were all so gentle, and nobody had an attitude. It really took the whole show to another level." Guthrie says she only learned of Springsteen's music after Bruce sent her mother an autographed copy of *Nebraska* in 1982, noting on the album cover that he was a huge fan of Woody's. And she says she only recently realized how much the two have in common.

"I think Woody and Bruce are incredibly similar. In fact, I just recently came upon a Springsteen biography, [Eric Alterman's *It Ain't No Sin To Be Glad You're Alive: The Promise of Bruce Springsteen*], and I didn't really know much about his life before that. And it is so unbelievably similar to my Dad's childhood. My father was on his own at age 14 or 15. If it wasn't for music and the arts, God knows what would have happened to him. He wasn't in trouble, but he probably wouldn't have made anything for himself if it wasn't for music."

Guthrie continues the comparison: "Self-taught, self-educated, troubles with his parents. And the amazing thing is despite all their troubles, Woody and Bruce still managed to have this incredibly sweet nature.... you can see it in their eyes and in their love for people and love for performing. And it not only sustains them, but look what they give back to hundreds of thousands of people. Bruce always has so much to give. It's like a never ending well that just flows and flows. My Dad was very much like that until the day he died."

What Woody Guthrie gave through his music is, indeed, immeasurable. *Til We Outnumber 'Em* gives sustenance and spirit to the long line of singer-songwriters and fans who have followed him. It is a great CD to have around, until that day comes, 'til we outnumber 'em. ➔



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Ani DiFranco produced this live album for her own Righteous Babe label, from the 1996 Woody Guthrie Tribute at Severance Hall in Cleveland. Captures Bruce's performances of "Riding in My Car" and "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)" on his own, and "Hard Travelin' Hootenany" and "'Til We Outnumber 'Em (This Land is Your Land)" with the All Severance Hall Cast. Also includes Billy Bragg, DiFranco, Indigo Girls, Pete Seeger, more. 19 tracks in all.....\$16



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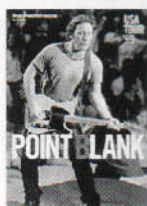
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THUNDER ROAD FINAL ISSUE: #6/7

We've scored the very last stack of these and can offer them at a lower price than we've seen before, but when they're gone, that's it. The first Springsteen fanzine, *Thunder Road*, stopped publishing in the early '80s after only a handful of issues, but they were an inspiration to *Backstreets* and remain great collectibles and great reads, too. This double issue was the magazine's swan song and probably its best. *Thunder Road* #6/7 is a huge 64-page issue packed with solid writing and beautiful photos. Especially at this price, it's a must-have.



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Continued from page 5

another way of looking at it. What would be the price if Bruce had stayed at home for the past 18 months? He's a busy, independently wealthy artist. The easiest thing would have been to not tour, just chuck out a few more lucrative box sets and leave it there.

I went to see Bruce at the Earls Court stand in London last May. I took a friend who likes Bruce Springsteen's music but doesn't have any of his albums. We both had a great evening, even though we sat on the very back row of the hall. I particularly liked the emphasis in the set on earlier tracks; what could have been a "greatest hits" exercise offered up rarities like "Rendezvous" and "She's the One." Money well spent, I thought.

Some time later, my friend asked me to do a compilation tape for him. "No cock rock," he said, "pick out some of the mellow stuff."

So I went through every album I had, plus all the singles, and wrote down a huge list of "mellow" songs. Then I cut the list down using my own narrative structure: young love/disenchantment/characters on the edge/mature love and redemption. I ended up with 135 minutes worth of music, and I was intentionally looking for album tracks, or alternate versions of well-known tracks. It was a fun exercise (in a very *High Fidelity* kind of way).

Subsequently, a few other friends asked for copies of the compilation. My friend from the concert said that he played the tapes constantly in his car. One friend said that standing on a London train station platform one morning listening to "Racing in the Street" on his MiniDisc left him feeling "inspired." My other friend had never heard the version of "Thunder Road"—his favorite Bruce song—as it's sung on the MTV *Plugged* album. He described it as "stunningly beautiful."

Because of that one night at Earls Court, and the way Springsteen's set list weaves together the early tracks with better known material, I went back and listened to virtually every single Bruce track I own, and three friends of mine heard a side of Springsteen that they had never experienced before.

There's no commercial value to Bruce in what I did. But this tour is a "rededication," and sometimes as an artist you have to spread the word among the faithful to remind them why they liked you in the first place. And, yes, that sermon costs exactly \$70.

David Connor
Peterborough, England



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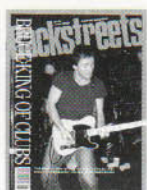
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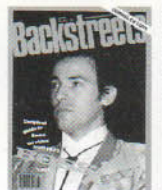
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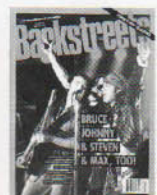
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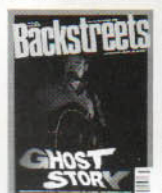
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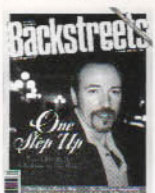
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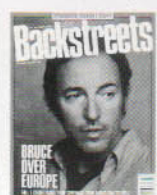
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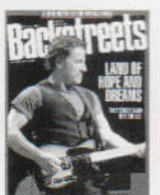
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